AUG 6 1965

# The North American Review

The Vicious Circle

Nobody Knows Me

Mailer: The Jew as Existentialist

Ici Man Habla Inglis

Eli and Emily

The Rabbit That Lost Its Nose

Fiction, Poetry, Departments, and Reviews

*Volume 250* *Number Three* $1.00

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STEPHEN PARKER'S poem is part of a longer work. His poetry appeared in our Autumn and Winter 1964 issues, and a poem by him is scheduled for appearance in *The New Yorker.*

The DAVID O. RANKINS anticipate.

A former TV writer and performer, EDYTHE SCHINDLER has had stories and articles in many publications.

ROGER WEAVER sends his poems from Eugene, Oregon. He was a student, briefly, in the late Theodore Roethke's "modern poetry" course at the University of Washington.

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THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW is revived with the cooperation of
The Honorable Claiborne Pell, Senator from Rhode Island.

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Ruth Richards
80 Woodlawn Ave.
New Rochelle, New York wrote the fine short story *The Pot of Gold* which appeared in NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW volume 2 No. 2.

Some malignant force from outer space evidently froze all editorial perceptiveness. All of us neglected to note that we credited *Pot of Gold* to another writer. Please forgive us, dear Ruth.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*May 25, 1965*
*Clovis, California*

I've just read Bruce Drake's small article on Dr. Tom Dooley, and would like to "verify" in my small way some of his unawed statements. I served in the paratroops with Dooley's brother — at least, he said he was his brother — and being naive at the time, was amazed to find that he heartily disliked Dr. Tom, for most of the reasons Drake pinpointed. This was in the late 1950's as I recall, about the time DELIVER US FROM EVIL was condensed in The Reader's Digest. According to his brother, Dooley was self-centered, arrogant, and highly ambitious. Later, on a television show ostensibly portraying Dooley's life, this same "brother" was conspicuously absent. As much as I dislike criticizing someone who isn't around to retort, if the fellow I served with was Dooley's brother, then indeed, there has been much ado about

Cordially.

*William Childress*

## ANARCHIST'S DICTIONARY

*Astronaut* — A special reporter for *Life* magazine.
*Birth Control Pill* — Strychnine.
*Book of Mormon* — God's failure as an author.
*Borrow* — Intending to return if pressed.
*Church* — An irrelevance perpetuated to avoid taxation.
*Compromise* — To temporarily delay.
*Divorce* — Similar to death among Catholics though the corpse continues to breathe. Protestants are more cognizant of human failures — and many live in Hollywood.
*Dribble* — See *National Review*.
*Drive-in Theater* — A great conception.
*Education* — A system for partially supplementing a teacher's income.
*Fatherly Advice* — "You will have to marry her."
*God, nature of* — Trinitarian: Three are one and one is three. Atheist: One is none and all is one. Pantheist: One is all and all is one. Aborigines: Forty, ninety, seventy-three.
*Harvard University* — A stage of rebellion for future government employees and business executives.
*Jew* — A pious Unitarian.
*Lunatic Fringe* — A large state on the West Coast.
*Marines* — L.B.J.'s Peace Corps.
*Marriage* — Two mistakes entering into a third with hopes of two or three more.
*Mink* — A small animal usually displayed on the backs of larger and more cunning beasts.
*Ostrich* — The U.N. bird.
*Pope* — The best-dressed Italian.
*Prohibition* — A preoccupation with alcohol without its delights.
*Roosevelt, Theodore* — An early John Wayne.
*Son* — Likeness of a fool.
*Tradition* — The refuse of an unsuccessful past.
*Train* — An airline safety device.

DAVID O. RANKIN



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## A MODEST PROPOSAL FOR PRESIDENT JOHNSON

Clearly, the problems of South Viet Nam, The Dominican Republic, and underdeveloped nations generally, are complex and difficult of solution.

I have long complained, for example, that we seem always to back dictators: Trujillo, Batista, Diem, Rhee. . . . But in countries in which the educational level of the populace is too low to make up an educated electorate, what else is possible but "strong man" or junta government? It is often, then, a question of backing a dictator or oligarchy with an enlightened program of social and economic reform. But in Cuba, we backed just such a horse and got Castro and communism.

Viet Nam is another fairly typical example of the boxes we climb into. The government of the South is fairly pro-western, but it is without stability or program. (Some newspapers are now dryly referring to it as the government of Saigon, rather than of South Viet Nam. And even that seems a bit generous.) Its army, too, is made up of disunited factions. Saigon is crippled both at home and in the field. And if the threat of national extinction will not unite the politically and militarily educated, if only for the period of emergency, it seems unlikely South Viet Nam can avoid disaster. Even if, by some military miracle, it did survive, the problem of disunity and the causes at its roots would remain, and a different kind of civil war would probably ensue. Given such a situation, it seems unlikely that military action by U.S. troops can be successful.

The problems in Cuba, in Viet Nam, in The Dominican Republic, and in other underdeveloped areas are not initially, it would seem clear, military ones. The problems range in type and degree, but they are initially problems of land reform, wages, taxation, social justice, education. . . . They become military problems when the governments of these countries fail to take appropriate reform action. (And, of course, often the communists are there to instruct the peasant and worker with regard to what he should want: to own his own land, to get an education for his children, and so on.)

We have learned something about foreign policy in recent years. We have learned that economic aid will not buy life for a corrupt political faction or secure a nation's allegiance to a system which does not work for it. We have also learned that the communists spend a great deal of money, time, and effort training cadres of peasants and workers to educate other peasants and workers. I would like respectfully to suggest that we have not made the best use of this knowledge.

Perhaps it is time to apply, beyond Viet Nam and for the long pull, what we do know.

I propose that the U.S. government establish and organize, in Washington, D.C., an International Institute of Politics and Social Reform. Its students would be recruited, not from the ranks of foreign aristocracy willing and able to afford an education in an American college or university and not from the ranks of foreign military officers. (The American government already sponsors an expensive program for the foreign military.) Institute students would be drawn from among the capable poor of every nation in Asia, Africa, and Latin America: from among village school teachers, farmers, laborers, artisans.

The staff of the Institute would consist of teachers highly skilled in history, political science, and economics, and trained to fluency in at least two of the languages represented by the students attending. (To achieve this a language crash program might be necessary.) Eventually, it might be possible to have classes taught in all the major languages represented.

Classes would be offered in the history of the parent country, its economy, and its present social and political system. Seminars would be held in areas pertinent to a particular nation: land reform, education, social justice, vocational technology. The program might conclude with an intensive lecture-seminar program in American history, politics, and democratic institutions and procedures.

Tuition, housing, books, and transportation from and to the home country would be provided by the U.S. government. And it would be made clear to these students that they would not be permitted to remain permanently in the U.S. For presently many student and professional immigrants to America wind up remaining; and while this enriches our culture, it leaves the parent country that much poorer.

The cost of such an institute might run to a billion a year. But we are farther behind in the race for men's minds than we ever were in the



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race for space. And at a billion a year, the institute would be cheaper than NASA, and more important to our immediate future. Through it we might be able to establish a climate for democratic revolution in those emerging nations whose future is of grave concern to us. We might have working with us, within a country, people who understand their own problems and poverty and are capable of effective political action to alleviate them. We might, in the end, be better understood by those nations who now resent us as "yanquis" and "imperialists."

We should be careful to recognize, however, that the very people whom we train may return home, and in the space of a decade, aid in establishing a non-democratic form of government. Even a communist government. Let us remember, then, and now, that the conditions which exist in underdeveloped countries are in some cases remote even from those which existed at the time of the thirteen colonies. We never had a real peasantry, and we destroyed our primitives. And even so, not everyone was allowed to vote. The landless were not; slaves were not; women were not. Our government evolved from oligarchy to democracy, a process which is even now continuing.

If we could establish an Institute of Politics and Social Reform to aid self-determination in underdeveloped countries, and if it were able to exert soon enough an influence comparable to that exerted through training programs in China and Russia, basically civil crises might be less likely to degenerate into military ones. And if military actions did become necessary, they might have less of the character of useless bloodshed.

RPD

## HAIL AND FAREWELL, MAYBE

These are difficult words to write.

This is the last issue of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW to be subsidized by Cornell College. Should this indeed be the last issue of the magazine, Cornell College will put up the cash to refund paid-up subscribers that portion of the subscription not fulfilled.

The staff is very grateful to the Cornell College administration for its support. President Arland Christ-Janer and Vice-President Cochran understood from the beginning that to start a magazine is a precarious undertaking. Their willingness to gamble cannot be underestimated.

Mr. Dana and I certainly understood this. I assume the burden of blame for the death of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW if it is to die, because I was unwilling to again make an irresistible case for more money. The results of my research dominated the shaping of the magazine because I have strong opinions and a loud, authoritative voice. It seemed to me that the world was not crying out for another scholarly journal. It seemed to me that there might be the ghost of a chance for success of a literate magazine which would publish the best fiction, poetry and articles it could obtain for the general reader.

There was a ghost of a chance. The ghost still hovers over NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, beckoning the staff, luring us like a Lorelei.

We hate to give up.

So why do we?

Because I do not believe a magazine ought to be endowed indefinitely. To prolong life with transfusions of fresh money only makes an inevitable death more painful . I could not make a grand pitch for an unending supply of funds.

If there is any reason for a publication to continue, it will. If there isn't, it ought to cease. This is the seventh issue of NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW. With the publication of the volume I #4, we mailed to 1000 paid subscribers. This issue of volume II #3 is being sent to slightly more than 800 subscribers.

THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW was considered worthy of inclusion among the 209 magazines indexed in *Social Sciences and Humanities Index*. This selection was made by librarians; yet, we have subscriptions from less than 500 of the 2200 largest academic libraries and from exactly 14 public libraries.

2,000 paid subscriptions would make us self supporting.

None of the staff gets paid and we have (with painful reluctance) pared our lofty initial intentions and cut to the bone our payments to contributors.

We have trickles of inquiry regarding the possible placement of advertisements. But only two paid ads in seven issues.

We are beginning to get some small standing orders from bookstores.

In fact, things are looking so optimistic, I'm beginning to think we'll find a way to get out the September issue minus our subsidy. After all, we have these four excellent stories that simply have to be gotten into print. And then there's that article about birth control pellets from air guns . . .

BER



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## LETTERS NEVER MAILED DEPARTMENT

Arkansaw, Wisconsin
June 30, 1965

Señor Juan Del Calle
Preso #9494, Prisión #16
Santa Rosa
Franciscan Republic

My dear little brown brother:

I certainly hope this reaches you before you move again. It is simply tiresome trying to keep up with your frequent changes of address. When are you going to take a position with some good, sound company like Panagra or United Fruit and settle down? It's high time for you to face up to the realities of your position as a father and a citizen.

Incidentally, this will be no more than a note, Juan. I'm emplaning tomorrow for Europe to read my paper, *The Influences of Efforts To Impose Birth Control On The Contributions Of Latin American Sub-Cultures To The Success Of International Communism,* before the World Conference of Cultural Scientists which convenes in Stockholm on July Fourth. Yes, I'm taking Alma and all seven children along.

We could never have afforded this marvelous educational opportunity for the children on a simple professor's earnings but my university has kicked in a little, I took advantage of the half-fare rates by signing up every member of the family in the Association of Cultural Scientists and then, too, we did get extra dividends from some tin stocks Alma inherited from her grandfather.

For a while we considered a vacation in Bermuda. It really might have been good for me professionally to have spent some time in one of those Latin American countries but I finally had to reject it as a possibility when one of the children mentioned a newspaper article about unrest down there someplace. (Have you heard anything about that?) Dio Jr. was quite upset when he had to unpack his Magic Ray gun and all those miniature missiles. He was really looking forward to going native.

Our present plans are probably better any way you look at it. The *Journal of Cultural Scientists* will surely publish my paper now. The European experience will indubitably broaden the children's cultural horizons as no amount of time among illiterate foreigners down there could ever do.

Enough about me?

What about you? What are you doing now?

I've always felt that you made a serious mistake when you went back home after we finished at State U. The opportunities in the States are unlimited for competent men in Latin American fields today. Look at me. I'll never forget that my interest really began during our time as first semester freshman roommates before I moved to the frat house at Thanksgiving time. If you'd just remember the principles of the Declaration of Independence and apply them down there the way we do up here, I'm sure everything would turn out nice for you.

Say hello to Delores and all the *niños* and *niñas* for me. How many are there now?

We won't be back in the good old Midwest on the campus of Saints Ludmilla and Christopher until July 10th because we're doing Europe in a Saab after I've read my paper in Stockholm on the 4th of July.

*Your Understanding Friend,*
*Diogenes Jones*

## THE PLACE OF THE POET LAUREATE

Originally, *poet laureate* was a university title awarded starry-eyed rhymsters for proficiency above and beyond the call of duty in creating Latin verses and had nothing to do with political patronage or the royal wink.

For instance, neither Skelton, the uncontained Tudor-tutor, nor Spenser, the flowery faerie of the Elizabethan Age, was a poet laureate in the modern sense. The former, while allegedly the first of many to influence the wayward wenching of Henry VIII, was but a university laureate; while the latter, sometimes listed erroneously as England's first official Poet Laureate, neither claimed nor was given official recognition.

More critics than not believe Ben Jonson to be the first official Poet Laureate by virtue of a grant by Charles I of one hundred pounds plus a wine ration adequate enough to keep the poetic fancy freely flowing, and, since Jonson, sixteen other men have tippled into the realm of poetic freeloading: Davenant, Dryden, Shadwell, Tate, Rowe, Eusden, Cibber, Whitehead, Warton, Pye, Southey, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Austin, Bridges, and Masefield.

If not wholly artistic, Poets Laureate have been durable, for, unlike the longer line of English Kings and Queens, the long line of English Poets Laureate remains unbroken, since Davenant (appointed 1638, died 1668) spanned the drab days of the royalless Roundheads and thus accomplished what may be considered his greatest achievement.

Of the select seventeen, three of the first four and five of the latter six are read today; and of the eight



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read, four or perhaps five may even be enjoyed, while the others are usually perused with sleepy-eyes as undoubtedly esoteric but utterly boring research and survey course requirements. The remainder — the *unread* nine, each a stalwart soul in his own day — now vary in long-undiscovered but well-earned degrees of 20th Century insignificance.

Austin, for example, has not been completely effaced by worthier bards; he may still be found occasionally in used book stores, and Cibber, if sought with care, may be unearthed — *somewhere*. Eusden, Whitehead, and Pye are virtually unknown. The first took to drinking — mayhap his wine ration; the second wrote tragedies — tragic only in poetic content; and the third is remembered fondly in a small corner of England for standing in the House of Parliament in 1788 and telling all who listened about less fortunate constituents whose hay crop for that year was insufficient. Tate, Rowe, and Warton are known but to the British Museum and a rapidly diminishing number of scholars who traipse about the earth covered with book dust and *MLA Stylesheet* footnotes. Finally, Shadwell is a name which at first seems familiar but which (after deep reflection) proves to be confused with a biblical personage popularized a few years ago by a Charles Laughton reading on the *Ed Sullivan Show*.

Yet, ironically, the seventeen poets, so diverse in both ability and renown, are mated, for better or for worse, in holy or unholy polygamy to that fickle bitch Immortality, in a union without benefit of clergy perhaps, but with the all-important sanction of the royal wink.

*T. J. McCauley*
*2429 Cedar Street*
*Philadelphia 25, Pa.*

## YOU KNOW HOW IT IS

Now I'm a fella who likes a good laugh and will laugh at any man's joke, if it's funny, and even if it ain't I'll snicker a little just to keep friends. You know how it is. And I've known fellas who do nothin' but laugh all their lives at about everything that's thrown their way — just laughin' and laughin' till they laugh themselves to death. But the most laughin' fella I ever did see happened into our little peaceful town one mornin' a few years back. Still remember it. He come walkin' peaceable enough down the center of town, but laugh! Well, I never did hear nobody laugh like this drunken young fella laughed. And when he passed us townsfolk and the buildin's and all, he laughed a laugh almost dirty like—not mean or ornery or immoral-like, just dirty. You probably heard that kinda laugh from folks when you tell them about some girl you're courtin' bein' a real good girl, or when you tell those same folks about some time your Ma kissed your cheek after spankin' you cause you said you was sorry. And you laugh right along cause they's your friends, and you don't want no hard feelin's over somethin' stupid like that. You know how it is.

Well anyhow, this drunken young fella kept right on walkin' down the main street of our town laughin' at each and every passerby—sometimes pointin' his finger and holdin' his stomach, he was laughin' so hard. And the folks around here in no way appreciated his laughin' at what they held sacred—namely just about everything. Some of the folks even stopped this drunken young fella and threatened to punch his nose or call the police if he didn't stop, but this just made the young fella laugh all the more, right in their faces.

Well finally, one of the oldest ladies in town (a real kindly soul, always doin' good for others) called the police and told them to get right down there. And the chief himself come down to see what all the fuss was about—and it sure was a fuss. Well, when the chief come up to the bar this young fella was at he had to fight his way past a real large crowd of townsfolk, all talkin' and threatnin' to lynch the young fella inside if he don't quit laughin'. Well, the poor chief, he don't want no violence in his town, but at the same time he don't want to lose the friendship of the townsfolk, cause election was comin' along in Jim-quick-time. You know how it is.

So the chief, he tells them folks to all go home and mind their P's and Q's and forget about the young fella who laughs at everybody, cause he ain't hurtin' nobody other than make them feel uneasy about all the things they say and do. But the folks tell the chief he ain't much of a chief if he lets things like this go on. So the chief tells them he'll go in and see what he can do.

And he goes in and sees the drunken young fella sittin' all by himself—cause the other drinkers can't stand his laughin', it was so dirty. Even the bartender left after three minutes of the young fella. They say it takes one to know one, and the bartender must have known, after all the years he spent behind that bar givin' drinks out and listenin' to those drinkers, just what the young fella knew.

Anyhow, the chief walked up to the fella and said, "Now you listen here, young fella! We have law and order in this town, and we're God-fearin' people . . ." But the poor chief never finished what he was goin' to say, cause the young fella laughed harder and harder. And outside the townsfolk got more and more wild with each laugh. And so the chief had to do his duty, just like every chief has got to.

And I swear, when that drunken young fella fell off the top of that car when it drove away and hit the end of that rope with a snap, he laughed his hardest, dirtiest laugh. The townsfolk, they laughed too, but kinda uneasy like. You know how it is.

*Ronald F. Oest*
*Sandia Park,*
*New Mexico*

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## UNREQUIRED READING

Names can be compelling. For many years I have had the nugatory habit of putting them down on scraps of paper. These are real people with genuine names given to prominent persons by their loving parents.

Savington Crampton
Outerbridge Horsey
Lately Thomas
Ludwig Baldass

Whenever I rummage through the dozens of names I've accumulated from newspapers and magazines, I always get a special pleasure when I encounter those contemporary and noteworthy Britishers Hugh Foot, Michael Foot and their M. P. brother, Sir Dingle Foot. Ma and Pa Foot must be a wonderful couple.

Familiarity breeds.

One observable result of the population explosion is the bastardization of creative art. There is so little talent. There are so many people. Other areas have been commented upon endlessly. For example, education has been diluted time after time to meet the needs of the least common denominator. Not too many years ago children used to be *taught* to read and the talented even learned to love it. Then through the carelessness and hammer-headed, primitive obstinacy of people, we simply became so numerous that teachers no longer had time to *teach* students to read. Children were merely exposed to it and if it did not take the program was diluted again until the least common denominator became the illiterate norm.

And so it went with the creative arts.

Except for a blessed handful, talent must be schooled to produce its best. And the best is small in quantity. If there is a lot of it, the superlative is hardly the applicable word. Whether the talent works with words or paint or marble or gum drops, the odds are slight that the toiler in the uranium pit of art will lift the raw material to breath-taking beauty, to mind-staggering truth, to heart-shuddering feeling.

The percentage of the people in the world with a scruple of creative talent is so slight it is almost nonexistent.

But people must have art. So the non-talented and the pedestrian frauds and the imitators confederate in their ignorance to pull the standards down to the least common denominator. In effect, they say, "If I can't chisel the marble into form, we must all denigrate the statue and worship only the pedestal. If I can't arrange the words into an expression of truth or beauty, we must throw a mindful of miscellaneous words at the paper and kneel before the great meaninglessness. If I can't bring the canvas to life we must all retreat to the level of aboriginal cave-painters and even beyond that to the chaos of unformed ideas, of mind barely emergent from the primal ooze, then kneel in homage before it."

There is so *little* creative talent. There are so *many* people. And everybody is entitled to art. Every single one of us. Yes, siree, Bob, we are!

Dave Messman — student, envelope-stuffer, label-licker and general handy-man for the NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW — informed me that the official title for his summer job last year was *Cotton Picker Spindle Inspector Checker* at $2.55 per hour.

This imposing title recalled to mind one of the world's truly fascinating volumes compiled for browsing.

*The Dictionary of Occupational Titles* is published by the U. S. Government and lists fifty thousand job titles. Hundreds of them make Dave's last summer title sound vulgar. You will not only chuckle as you browse, a new career may have irresistible appeal.

BER

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### THE MOVIES

I stand in line at night to see a movie,
Cold and silent wait with many others,
Wondering what's taking it so long
To let us in, and why I've come at all.

For now I can't recall the picture's title,
Whether it's of romance or adventure,
Who the star is, how much I have to pay:
But it is night and cold and no one talks,

And I begin to wonder if it's dying
Waiting presupposes, if that's the reason
Entrance takes so long, remembrance fades,
And I am caught between two unknown minds?

Perhaps I have been made to look for nothing,
Lured by lights like stars to wait and shiver,
Hemmed by dark? And what will I possess
When I have paid for death and entered it?

### NEAR CHRISTMAS

My town has fixed these lights in lieu of stars
Above its streets, for wild song
Loudspeaker-carols in the empty park.
Those who meet by chance talk too long,
Until, having nothing trivial left to say,
They tear apart. In fields beyond my town
Snow becomes the residues of May's
Stars that hissed and flickered bad luck down
On lovers in the grass. A tiny beast
Squeals beneath an owl, and farthest off,
Where black horizons are and not the least
Whisper, the why of wild hope and lost
Belief reflects upon itself forever —
As if it asked for nothing, and couldn't answer.

*Mark McCloskey*



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CAST

*Eli*
*Emily*
*Ted*
*Cathy*

SCENE:

An antique shop; to be represented by a variety of objects placed on numerous chairs scattered about the stage. On one chair, a battered wooden tub; on another, an old print, upright; on a third, a stuffed bird; and so forth. Some empty chairs. A table set for two, upstage right. On the wall, rear, an enormous sign with one word in Old English print: *Antiques*

AT RISE:

Bright lighting; morning. ELI and EMILY are seated stiffly, side by side, on two chairs. They should appear as two more objects in the room. They are both elderly; both dressed about thirty years behind the times. After a few moments, they speak, but without looking at one another.

ELI

Good morning, my love.

EMILY

Good morning, sweetheart, dear.

ELI

Today is . . .?

EMILY

(With a firm downward thrust of her head)
Sunday.

ELI

The Lord's day.

EMILY

Time for church, Eli. Get your hat on.

ELI

Hold on there. Might miss a customer. Sunday's our busiest day. Fact.

EMILY

So it is.

ELI

We might sell a Victrola, today.

EMILY

So we might.

ELI

God helps those who help themselves.

EMILY

So he does.

ELI

An idle man bringeth down wrath.

EMILY

Amen.

ELI

We can pray right here.
(They both bow their heads)
The Lord is my shepherd . . .

EMILY

I shall not want.

ELI

Our Father . . .

EMILY

Which art in heaven.

ELI

Prayer meeting ended.
(They raise their heads; now they become more animated)
What's for lunch, Emily?

EMILY

Grits.

ELI

What else?

EMILY

Grits.

ELI

And what else.

EMILY

(Again, firm downward head movement; finality incarnate)
More grits.

ELI

Umm . . . I'm not hungry.

EMILY

You've got to eat . . . Strengthen my arm, oh Lord.

ELI

Well . . . Humm . . . hmm . . .hmpfh . . .
(ELI rises and sits at the table, fork up vertical in one hand, knife in the other. EMILY takes a stuffed, mounted bird and puts it on his plate in front of him)

ELI

*That* old thing again? Hummm. Hmm. Drat!

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EMILY

It'll fill your belly.

ELI

Where's the pepper?

EMILY

Front of your nose, Eli. Front of your nose.
(ELI takes up a pepper mill and grinds it over the bird)
Leave a little. Might get a customer.

ELI

(Throws down his knife and fork)
Well that takes the cake. Man can't even eat hearty any more.

EMILY

Business before pleasure.

ELI

Well that just takes the cake.
(He gets up)
Lost my appetite.

EMILY

(Removing the bird)
Tomorrow's another day. Waste not, want not.

ELI

(Picking up an object from a chair. As emotionless as dust)
Oh look. Looky here, Emily, my love.

EMILY

(Also emotionless)
Yes, Eli, sweetheart dear?

ELI

My old straight razor from nineteen oh-two.

EMILY

Oh-three. I gave it to you for your birthday.

ELI

Now how did that show up? Looked for that for sixty odd years.

EMILY

What price we going to ask?

ELI

(Turns it over, examines it)
Oh . . . I'd say fi' dollar. Authentic McKinley era.

EMILY

McKinley got killed in oh-one. That razor's oh-three.

ELI

Oh-*two*, I say. Oh-*two*. . .

EMILY

Oh-three . . . mule!

ELI

Oh-two . . . nanny goat! It was my twelfth birthday, nineteen oh-two.

EMILY

How could you shave if you were only twelve?

ELI

Didn't. Didn't shave till I was thirty. Not a once. Wore a beard. In nineteen hundred twenty, went into a barber and said, whack her off. And off she came, sweet as molasses and honey. Fact.

EMILY

You only had a beard till nineteen fourteen. I gave you that razor to cut it off with.

ELI

Had this razor since nineteen oh-two. It was my father's.

EMILY

It was *my* father's. He died, so I gave it to you for your birthday, nineteen fourteen. We'd been married for two whole years.

ELI

(Very surprised)
Did your father die in nineteen fourteen?

EMILY

'Course he did. Don't you remember. Cut his throat with his straight razor.

ELI

So he did.

EMILY

Then I gave it to you.

ELI

(Checks it on his finger nail)
Still sharp.

EMILY

Let me see. Hmm . . . Real antique.
(She examines it carefully)
Eighteen fifty-eight. Pre-Civil War. Twenty-six dollars and fifty cents. Let 'em talk us down to twenty. Get that hammer.
(He takes the hammer)
Smack the blade.
(He hits the blade with a blow of the hammer)
Smack the handle.
(Another shot on the handle)
Let me see.
(He gives the razor to her and she examines it)
One more to the blade.
(He gives the blade another jolt. She takes the razor and examines it again)
Perfect. Where's our Civil War corner?
(He points. She places it with dainty nicety on a chair. She steps back, observes as an artist would a painting, adjusts again, steps back and admires.)
There. My, my. Our Civil War collection is growing.

ELI

But our Revolutionary stock is down. We need more wooden eagles. Gold ones.

EMILY

Well? What's keeping 'em?

ELI

Told Dale. I told him, I did. Dale, I said, get going. We need more eagles.

EMILY

A stitch in time saves nine. Lost a customer yesterday. No eagles.

ELI

Dale's slow, but he's clever. His eagles look like eagles, by golly. Expert, he is. What's his years again, Emily my love?

EMILY

Seventeen ninety-two to eighteen oh-seven. Best eagles on the East Coast.

ELI

Shame he whittles so slow, though.



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EMILY

(Head down, final decree)
Slow but steady wins the race.

ELI

Fact.
(A little bell on a chain tinkles. They both come to attention)

EMILY

Customer.

ELI

I'll take it. Ready?
(In a loud voice, unctuous, ham-acting)
Mother, did you hear the door bell?

EMILY

(Singing with a high lilt)
Ye . . . es. It must be-ee the children, home for a vi-hi-sit

ELI

(Loud)
Oh my. I'll go see. I don't want them to know we're selling all our little treasures. Take down the sign, mother.
(He opens the door. A young couple enters, TED and CATHY. ELI speaks with fake surprise)
Oh! I thought you were . . . Oh my! . . . Mistake, mother! Customers.

EMILY

(Still fake)
Come in. Come in. Feel right at home. Because this is our little home. All this. And we're selling it spoon by spoon. All authentic.
(TED and CATHY are embarrassed)

ELI

Yes. Just found my Civil War razor this very morning, didn't I, mother?

EMILY

It was his Grandpa's. Honor thy father and thy mother.

ELI

Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.

EMILY

Home is where the heart is.

ELI

Keep cool with Coolidge.

TED

Ah . . . we just sort of wonder if we could sort of browse, a little.

CATHY

Yes. We're sort of just browsing.

EMILY

(As if struck by momentous news)
Well, of course you are. Browse to your heart's content.

ELI

We love people to browse among our things.

EMILY

Our personal family belongings.

ELI

Intimate knickknacks and filigrees.

EMILY

You don't have to buy a thing. Just go through all our possessions, piece by piece. Take your time, now.

ELI

We have all day.
(TED and CATHY look at each other, perplexed)

TED

Well, we don't want to intrude . . .

EMILY

Oh you're not intruding. See that sign? Antiques! This is an antique shop. Isn't that so, Eli?

ELI

Looks like it is.

CATHY

(Spying an old wooden tub)
Oh, look at that, Ted. Wouldn't this be wonderful for my big philodendron.

TED

Sure. That would be great.

EMILY

Are you going to put a houseplant in that? I washed my babies in that. Made butter in it.

CATHY

Oh? Wasn't butter made in a butter churn?

EMILY

Couldn't afford one.

TED

How much is this?

EMILY

That? Let me see. How much is that, father dear?

ELI

Let me see. I'll have to look at it, Grandma . . . This is . . . hmm . . . yep. Dates from eighteen eighty-one. (To TED))
See that there cross on the bottom with the dark brown knothole. That's called a mark. Yes sirree. Cost you . . . thirty-five dollars. Authentic antique.
(TED whistles)

EMILY

Bona fide. Cost us forty-five dollars new.

CATHY

(Examines the tub a moment)
Did you buy this in eighteen eighty-one?

EMILY

Mother did

CATHY

But forty-five dollars in eighteen-eighty would be worth about five hundred dollars today, wouldn't it?

EMILY

I really wouldn't know, love. My head was never good with figures.

ELI

Anyway, it was eighteen-eighty-*one* she said, not eighteen *eighty*.

EMILY

(To ELI)
Grandpa, dear, would you step over here a moment.
(To CATHY and TED)
You children just browse away.
(Aside to ELI, while CATHY and TED browse)
She's one of them suburban smarties. *I'll* handle this.

ELI

Oh you will! You and your forty-five dollars new!



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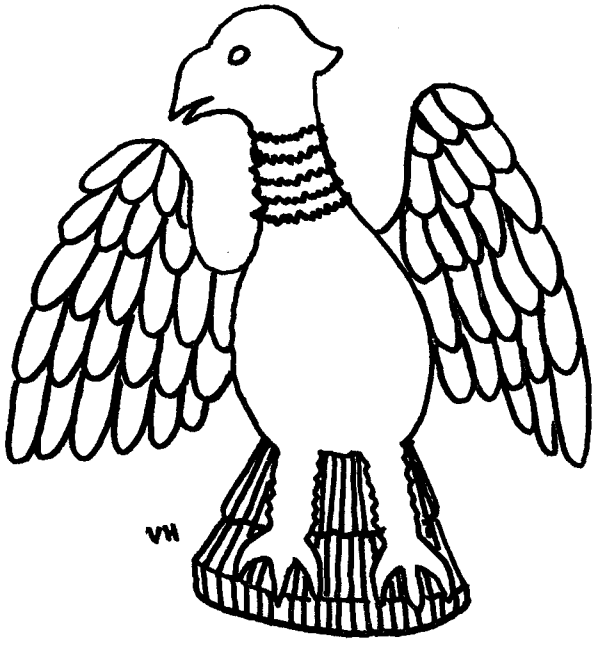
EMILY

I'll sell her something, you wait and see. Now you just sit down over there and look pleasant. Smile when they look your way.

(ELI sits and composes himself; he is stiff and formal as at the start of the scene. Throughout the following, as TED or CATHY pass near him while they browse, ELI gives a short, stiff smile which is quickly withdrawn when they pass.)

CATHY

(To EMILY)
Do you have any wooden eagles, by any chance?



EMILY

Land sakes and Land O'Goshen, wooden eagles are as scarce as hen's teeth.

ELI

(Seated stiffly)
Scarcer. Fact.

EMILY

But you could order one. Twenty dollar deposit. Have it in a week.

TED

Well . . . we'd like to see it first. Every eagle is different, isn't that so?

EMILY

Describe what you want and we'll find it for you, never fear, love.

(Looks off, as if prepared for deep concentrated listening)

CATHY

Well, it ought to be big and gold . . .

EMILY

How big?

ELI

How gold?

TED

(Holds his hands apart)
About like this. For above the fireplace.

CATHY

How much would one cost?

EMILY

Hundred ninety-five dollars.

TED

A hundred and ninety-five dollars!

EMILY

Every feather carved in detail. Scroll held in beak.

ELI

In claws. Ribbon in beak.

EMILY

Eli, love!

ELI

Dale wouldn't like that.

CATHY

Dale?

EMILY

Our son. He has all the eagles in his little house in Nantucket.

TED

We can't afford that much anyway. I know antiques are expensive, but that's an awful lot.

EMILY

Not for the real thing.

TED

No, I suppose not.

(TED and CATHY continue to browse. CATHY lifts up a print)

CATHY

Look, Ted It's a Currier and Ives.

TED

Is that a *real* Currier and Ives?

EMILY

Absolutely authentic. That used to be over our bed. Lovely scene, isn't it? The frame's authentic, too. Dates back a hundred years.

TED

How much is this one?

EMILY

Hundred ten dollers, including frame, glass, eye hooks, wire and nail.

(TED and CATHY look at each other; CATHY shakes her head; TED shrugs and puts down the print)

Well, just browse. I'm sure you'll find something.

(TED stops at the stuffed bird. ELI emits a silent, eloquent belch)

That's been in the family for sixty years. Lovely, isn't it.

(TED lifts it up, examines it very closely. He tries to suppress a sneeze, finally succumbs with a gigantic one)

EMILY

(Loud)
God bless you!

ELI

'Sundheit!!

TED

(Another sneeze coming)
Smells . . . ah . . . ah . . . smells like . . . ah . . ah . . . smells like pepper . . . .ahchoooo!



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CATHY

Bless you. My goodness, are you coming down with something?

EMILY

A little dusty. We can spruce it up for you.

TED

Combien?

EMILY

Huh?

TED

That means how much, in French. Ha aha . . a . . ahem.

EMILY

You a foreigner?

ELI

(Still sitting stiffly)
Don't care for 'em.

TED

No, I . . . ah . . . I'm an American, same as you.

CATHY

I happened to be born in *Ireland*. My father died there when I was three. That's when my mother brought me here.

EMILY

Hmm . . That's nice. My great-great-grandmother was born in Hartford, Connecticut. Great-*great*-grandmother!

TED

My father was born . . in Poland.

EMILY

(Vicious look. ELI likewise)
Where!

CATHY

Cracow, Poland. Any objections?

ELI

Hmm.

EMILY

Humm.

TED

Well, anyway . . . how much is this stuffed bird? It's a beauty.

ELI

Not for sale! We're closed for the day.

EMILY

Eli, love!

ELI

But, Emily . . .

EMILY

Eli!

ELI

Oh, horsefeathers!

EMILY

That there bird is a hundred even.

TED

Oh golly . . . that's too much . . . I mean just for a stuffed bird.

EMILY

These are competitive prices. It's an authentic American bird.

CATHY

Maybe I ought to tell you what we have in mind.

EMILY

Why not just do that, love.

CATHY

Why just don't I. You see, we live in Forest Hills. In an apartment, and—

EMILY

Oh, one of them things—

CATHY

If you don't mind . . . And we thought we'd take a drive into the country and look for antiques. Because we're going colonial. All our friends have gone. It's definitely in.

EMILY

Oh. Did you hear that Eli? They're going colonial.

ELI

Hmm . . . How's the weather in Cracow?

EMILY

Don't mind him. Missed his lunch, today.

TED

(To CATHY)
I guess the only really old thing we own right now is your father's big old shaving mug—the one with the cactus growing in it.

EMILY

(Dry)
How nice.

CATHY

Ted, I don't want you discussing my intimate possessions.

TED

It's not intimate—
(To EMILY)
She's got, you know, sort of a thing about her father.

CATHY

(Angry)
That cactus is a shrine to my father's memory!

TED

But he died when you were only three years—

CATHY

The subject is definitely closed!

TED

But I . . .

CATHY

Definitely closed!

EMILY

(Cuts in, sharply)
You had something in mind, I think you said . . .

CATHY

Oh yes. Now what was it? . . . Do you remember, Ted? . . . Maybe we ought to just look some more.

EMILY

Well, don't give up. We have all day.

ELI

And all night.
(CATHY and TED browse, lift up objects, show them to each other, put them down. EMILY keeps just in front of them, anticipates what they're going to look at next, adjusts, arranges, pushes things toward them. Nothing seems to strike them as just the right thing. Finally, EMILY is just to the side of ELI. She adjusts ELI in the chair as if he were the next object to be



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examined. ELI remains stiff. She straightens his tie, flicks her hand across his head as if there were dust on it, draws his mouth into a broad smile with her fingers. CATHY spies him. The following must be played seriously)

CATHY

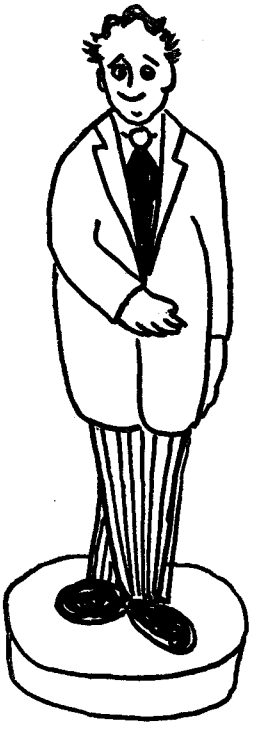
Now that's interesting.

TED

Yes, very.

EMILY

Authentic turn of the century. McKinley era. Note the jacket and tie.



CATHY

I've always wanted one of those.

TED

Oh come on. What would you do with it? It would only crowd up the living room.

CATHY

It would go well with my shrine.

TED

I know that, Cathy, but . . . well it must be very expensive.

EMILY

No. Not terribly. Hundred twenty-five dollars, complete.

CATHY

(Firmly)
Ted, I absolutely insist.

TED

Is it really authentic?

EMILY

Money-back guarantee. Shall I wrap it?

TED

(To CATHY)
So you're really set on it, are you?
(CATHY taps her foot, impatiently)
I . . . oh, I suppose so.
(TED takes out his wallet and counts out the money; gives it to EMILY)

CATHY

(Looking at ELI from several angles)
I can't wait to get it home. Don't wrap it up. I want to look at it in the car.

EMILY

Whatever you like. Now be careful; it's fragile. A little paint job wouldn't hurt, either.
(CATHY raises ELI up. He rises stiffly, still smiling. That smile remains throughout)

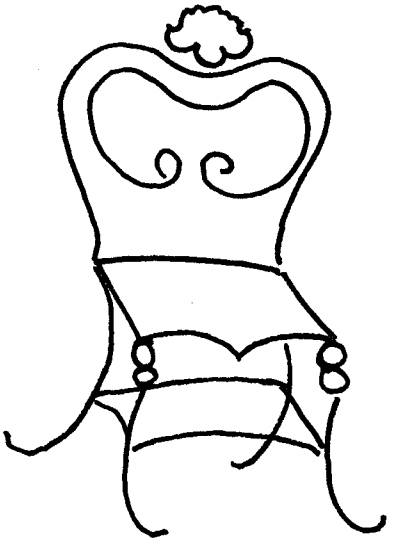
TED

Let me help. Here give me the other end.
(Slowly, CATHY and TED walk ELI off. EMILY counts the money, then just as they exit)

EMILY

Well, ta ta you two. Enjoy it in your apartment in Forest Hills. Wherever *that is.*
(She sits in the chair as at the start, stiffly. A pause, then)
My, what a busy day. Eli was right. Sunday is our busiest day . . . Waste not, want not . . . A fool and his money are soon parted . . . Man proposes, God disposes . . . A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush . . . Make hay while the sun shines . . .
(As the curtain descends)
Remember the Maine. Don't tread on me. A chicken in every pot. Fifty-four forty, or fight. Happy days are here again. See America first. E Pluribus Unum.

*CURTAIN*





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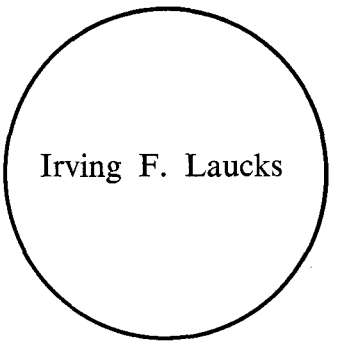
# The Vicious Circle




EVER SINCE THE FIRST WORLD WAR THE NATIONS HAVE TALKED DISARMAMENT BUT ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING.

In the last ten years these discussions have narrowed down to Russia and the United States, but still with no tangible result. The U.S., fearing undisclosed arms, insists on too rigid inspection for Russian acceptance. These at least are the reasons that appear on the surface for failure. Perhaps the Kremlin also has the same fears, plus the additional one that a disarmed U.S. might change its mind and rearm much faster than Russia could. Even though there were no other reasons it is evident that the problem is one of great complexity, year by year growing worse, with likelihood of agreement steadily diminishing. The great mass of citizens have not yet realized that the dangers of cold war and arms racing are far greater than those of disarming; consequently they hesitate to express their opinion on so complex and technical a subject and do little but hope that diplomats may have some concern for the happiness of humanity.

Primitive man soon found out that in order to withstand the teeth and claws of his natural environment he must cease killing his immediate neighbors. From this realization, organization steadily proceeded; village with village, tribe with tribe, barony with duchy learned to live in mutual peace until finally in single organizations of law and order large areas were embraced. Until fifty years ago each nation presumably had power to defend its citizens from external attacks. With the development of the airplane and especially the nuclear missile this is no longer true. The environment of each nation contains greater dangers than did that of primitive man; in order to survive, the individual nation must soon take the same steps as did individual primitive men or tribes — they must now learn cooperation instead of antagonism. They must organize under a central power in order to survive. Such organization is equally important with disarmament, and perhaps even more difficult to obtain.

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In the face of all his history why is it that man, self-named *sapiens,* should choose to risk extinction in a nuclear war rather than to apply his hard-earned experience to the solution of this problem? And yet a World Authority *with power* is today little discussed. Some of the governmental disarmament proposals have not even mentioned its need. Some people advocate an authority with no, or very slight, power. The first small step in this direction, the United Nations, is but lightly regarded by many. While politicians have declaimed loudly about the need of disarmament, few have stressed the need of accompanying World Authority. The two however are inseparable, for the world has already seen how quickly a dictator can rearm a complaisant nation.

John Smith has been taught for four or five centuries to think of his own nation as the ultimate authority. When the early modern sovereign, with the aid of the cities and commerce, was victorious over both the universal Church and the feudal barons, he spared no effort to instill in his subjects' minds the sacredness of *his* sovereignty. For several centuries he succeeded in attaching himself to divine power — for which he had some precedent in ancient despots. He could do no wrong — either to his own subjects or in destroying those of another king. Much of the veneration previously accorded the Church became transferred to the sovereign and later to the nation, to a John Bull



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or an Uncle Sam, to forefathers, to a flag and so on. So we say "my country — right or wrong. . . ." So we find politicians publicly extolling the wisdom of tradition, of the past. Children learn "patriotism" in school, often not far removed from chauvinism, especially in dictatorships. Yet today this precious "sovereignty" is at the mercy of any other nation that chooses to lob over a few score missiles. Veneration of a divinity so tenuous as to vanish under attack in a quarter hour seems rather silly; nevertheless, so strong is tradition, so difficult is it to discard obsolescent custom, that the thought of yielding any portion of this mythical sovereignty to a World Authority is abhorrent to many.

Simultaneous disarming is difficult for two feudists; either one might retain a concealed weapon. It is much more practical for each to hand his guns to an officer of the law. The nations, however, have no authority to which to hand their arms, and they can't establish an authority because of the tensions and distrust engendered by their arms and arms racing. This is the vicious circle which must be broken before long if civilization — or even most life on earth — is to continue. While all life would not perish and scattered spots of civilization might persist if war came tomorrow, this may very likely not be true ten or even five years hence, at the rate capability of destruction is increasing. The Doomsday of the nuclear strategists may be just around the corner. Even the present stock of ten tons of equivalent high explosive for *every man, woman and child in the world* only needs uniform distribution in order to do the trick.

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Besides the obsolescent yet persistent effect of the old sovereign's propaganda, there is yet another reason that increases the difficulty of establishing a single World Authority. Man has both suffered and gained by his love of Power. While only sporadically manifest in lower animals it has reached the importance of an instinct — acquired by the otherwise largely defenseless anthropoid when evolving into primitive man, when first he discovered his power armed with a club. With each female he captured, with each saber-tooth, with each new invention in weaponry, his love of power increased, but finally there came a time when social organization became necessary for survival. Individual love of power then became largely transformed into love of group or tribal power; finally into national power. Today, aside from captains of industry, international financiers, and politicians, most men must enjoy this love vicariously if at all. The first two employ science, tools, and money to increase their power, while the politician attempts to combine each ordinary citizen's portion into a national force which he himself can then control: internally to perpetuate his tenure of office or externally to force other "statesmen" to do his bidding . A very necessary contribution to his effort, however, is the support of the industrialists and financiers, that they too may increase their power by the same process.

As long as the world is split into more than a hundred nations, each one offers opportunities to ambitious politicians to exercise power over some neighbor, even at the risk of war. A World Authority would seriously curb this exercise — therefore for the power seeker it too becomes "unthinkable" — and its final establishment will depend on the ordinary citizen's willingness to relinquish his own love of power for the sake of his and his children's happiness.

Innovations, new methods, progress, rarely come as the result of conferences of diplomats or meetings of boards of directors. Rather such are concerned with preserving or enlarging the *status quo* of power. An industry or business has an executive for action and progress. A nation also has an executive, but as the affairs of a democracy multiply he may find himself so entangled with boards and commissions and special interests that a break with the *status quo* becomes very difficult. A recent President warned the American people of this danger. In a democracy, however, the executive can always go to the people on his own initiative and generally can depend on their support for right action.

Several years ago I proposed that the President of the U.S. take such an initiative and order destroyed two per cent of *each class* of arms; then, *fait accompli,* ask every other nation to reciprocate. If the Kremlin, whose apparent desire for disarmament is greatest, had followed this lead, the series of two per cent destructions would have achieved in perhaps five years a completely disarmed world.

It was believed that the first year or two of small destructions would have eased world tension and distrust sufficiently so that the nations might have been able then to agree on a World Authority to which the remaining arms of all nations would then have been transferred in installments, rapidly making it stronger than



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"I HAVE MERGED, LIKE THE BIRD, WITH THE BRIGHT AIR"
— Theodore Roethke, "The Abyss"

And the ripples of the circles
In the bright pool never cease.

Dark tendrils ring the crumbling
Hothouse now. The lightbulb burned
Bare, its cord empty below. There,
Inching towards light, insect legs
once churned.

Man whose body brothered bears,
Whose howl was heavenward,
What sucked the song from you
As you ambled down abysmal stairs?
Like carrion birds that watch the hawk,
We followed your circles
As the beak plunged down,
Freeing us from the death of chalk.

On dangled string the insect
Envied the horizontal force
of growing hothouse feeler.
Add age to halt the course,
Then burning floor's an easy
Drop, an icy pool. Nature rots
From so much growing. Too much
Anger weights. Too much love clots.

Bear, bird, insect, crawling creeper,
Just before the pool turned black,
Did you behold an angered sun?
Did you "move toward God, or merely
another condition"?

Birds circle over my head.
Your circles widen under.

any individual nation, and enabling final complete disarmament without having to worry about imperfect inspection. No undisclosed cache of arms, for example, would be important in the presence of such a well armed Authority.

Criticism of Reciprocal Disarmament (RD) largely ignored the ability of the Authority to obviate the need of too rigid inspection. Perhaps it was feared that disarmament would proceed without the Authority ever becoming a reality. Perhaps nobody really wanted an Authority. At the time RD was proposed it was believed that Russia was considerably ahead of the U.S. and destroying the first two per cent of our arms then seemed like a tremendous sacrifice — leaving us quite at the mercy of the Kremlin.

An initiative is still possible that would break the "vicious circle"; that would avoid the supposed dangers of Reciprocal Disarmament; that would not decrease the cherished protection of our arms but rather increase it; that would both accomplish disarmament as well as the needed accompanying World Authority.

Let the President now invite every nation to subscribe to an Authority, whose *sole purpose* would be preventing international war. To this Authority every subscriber would commence to turn over its arms as fast as the Authority was able to train men to receive them. But if some hesitate at first, *let us not delay our own action* waiting for universal agreement. Sufficient nations will welcome such a move to establish it as a *World* Organization; and if it is properly organized and conducted as such it will be only a question of time before all the peoples of the world will induce their governments to join. America will lead again as it did two centuries ago to a new freedom, freedom from fear and the crushing weight of armaments.

Proper organization and conduct mean primarily that it must not in any way be open to suspicion of furthering the interest of any one nation, ideology, economy, religion, or other grouping of mankind. It must *not* be an American or a capitalist organization. This will be the most difficult part of the organizing task — particularly in view of Communist suspicion of capitalist motives. But it can be done if the end is kept steadily in view and the urgency realized. The first hurdle will be the composition of the executive board, which might be composed, say, of three Communists, three "Capitalists," and three "Neutrals." Perhaps they could be chosen by the World Court. If Russia joined at the start, each might be selected by his own government. If Russia did not join at once, it might be difficult for a representative Russian to serve. Red China should also be especially invited. Perhaps Communists of other nations might initially at least have to occupy both Russian and Chinese seats. *Majority rule would govern.*

Doubtless this will appear to most readers a task beyond the capability of today's political man to perform; so it would be if the *start* is to depend on initial universal agreement. So it is also if one envisions a World Authority full fledged and all powerful in action next year. But it will be some years before such stature could be attained. If a start was made at once,



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with the U.S. as the largest contributor, it would be at least five years before the might of the Authority would be as great as the diminishing residue of American armaments. Even if Russia also joined and started transferring its arms right away, the present balance of power would not be greatly altered for several years. Though the Authority to begin with had not much actual strength of enforcement, the mere fact that a beginning had been made of an institution which every thinking person must agree is ultimately necessary for survival, would make a tremendous improvement in world morale. The neurosis of peoples thwarted in their search for security and happiness, their fears and suspicions, all would begin to diminish; hope would revive.

The Authority could also begin at once with its secondary function of educating the peoples of the world to live together without war. Let any man who says this is impossible because "you can't change human nature" recall that a few hundred years ago people said the same about slavery, women's rights, legal torture, race relations, and quite a few other human customs then hallowed by tradition. It is not yet time to sell human progress short.

Some will say — "but the cost!" True it will be expensive — and it may be that much of the initial cost will fall on the U.S. But the cost need at least be no greater than our yearly military budget, but with this tremendous difference — now we spend every year more and more with no limit in sight but war or bankruptcy; while after the first few years of an Authority's establishment the cost to each member and to the world will steadily diminish. Eventually all but a few of the hundred and more billions that the world spends annually for armaments can be diverted to increasing the happiness of humanity.

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The character of the Authority's armament should not be hard to decide. We don't arm the Town Marshal with a club to cope with bandits' machine guns. Initially the Authority must have nuclear power and retain a decided superiority until all danger from nuclear arms in national hands has ended. I remember in my high school debating course a subject: which is more powerful, fear of punishment or hope of reward? Well, the Authority will use both. Wanton aggressors will be restrained by fear of punishment. For this, overwhelming power is necessary. Punishment must be deliberate but certain. Imagine the worst possible case — a nuclearly armed non-member makes a wanton attack on an unarmed member. The likelihood of a nation committing such aggression with certain punishment to follow would be infinitesimal. The Authority has the advantage over the Town Marshal — the nation criminal cannot hide or escape. Punishment would fit the crime. The incursion of a few thousand aggressors across a neighbor's boundary would be treated differently than, for example, the nuclear bombing of cities.

I have been asked, "Do you believe that any executive board in cold blood would ever order as a punishment the nuclear bombing of an aggressor's cities?" This question is not as hard as it sounds. The executive board would not be called upon to slaughter millions of innocent people. Ample warning would be given for complete evacuation of specified cities, etc., to be destroyed. Nor would it be necessary to use nuclear bombs to carry out a sentence. Severe punishment can be inflicted with conventional high explosive. The nuclear power of the Authority might be retained merely as a deterrent; as now each protagonist proclaims its own power.

The dangers to the people and cities of all (unarmed) member nations would be almost nil. Let us take the case of America. At present we can only *hope* that our overawing might will prevent anyone attacking us without warning. But if someone decides to do so, their "first strike" must wipe out our weapons bases, and doubtless some cities as well.

When the Authority is fully equipped, a first strike against it would be highly improbable because of its strength; there would be no point whatever to a first strike against one of its members. The fear of first strikes is therefore ended. If no first strike — then no second. No single nation or foreseeable group would dare to defy the collective strength of the world.

The missile bases of the Authority would be located outside the territory of its members, under its own control, and as far as possible from human habitation. I believe there are sufficient islands of little value available from which long range missiles could reach *every* nation's territory.

If we are to continue to have crises an Authority as world policeman would be quite a comfort! But the Authority will eliminate crises before they arise. Crises come because one nation attempts to exert power over another. The attempting party would first have to reckon with



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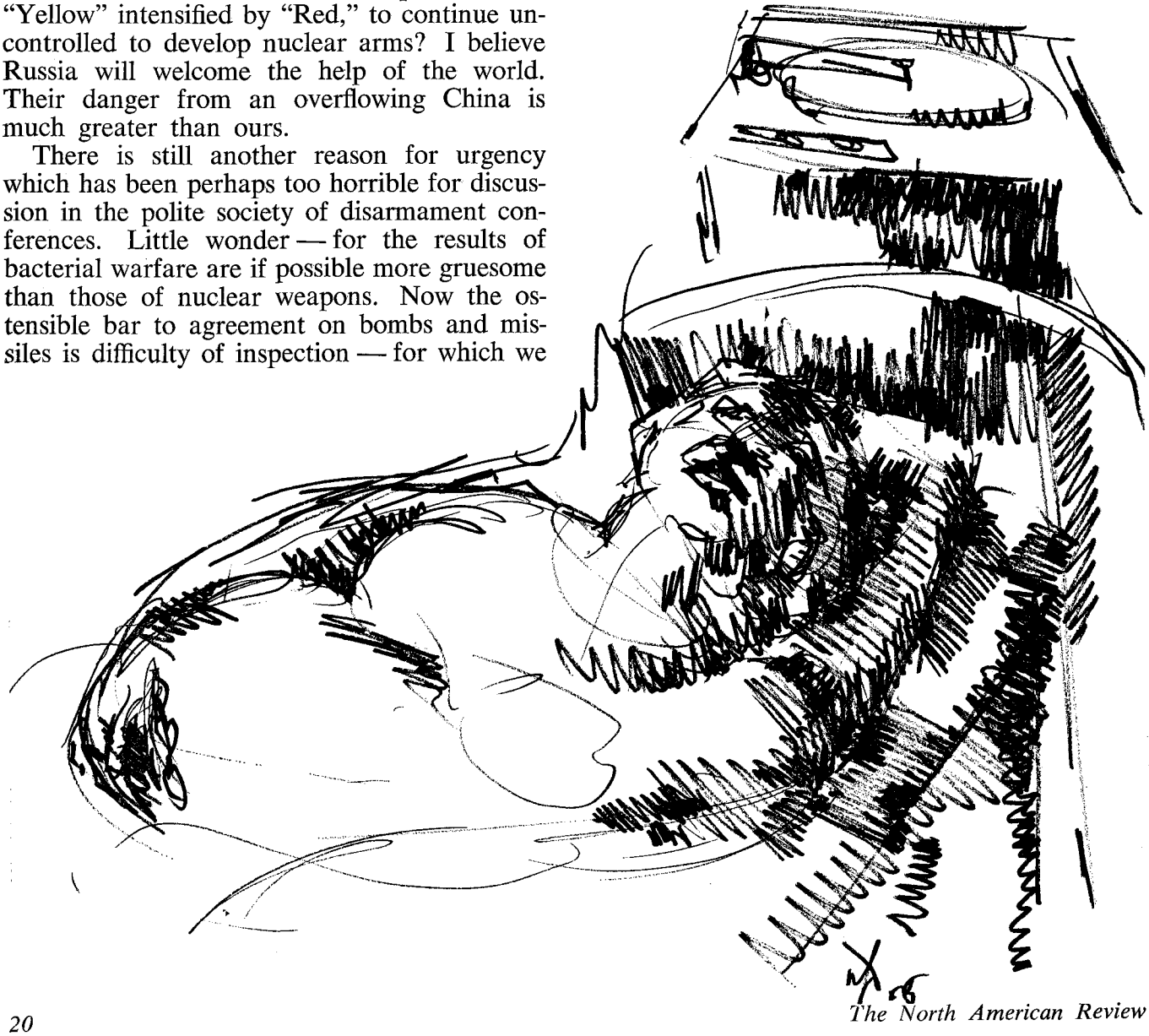
the Authority — whose verdict would be — you can exert power in any way you choose except by armed might. Reasoning, argument, discussion, persuasion . . . all would still be permissible — only power and force are barred.

Who might be expected as charter members? I believe there would be a very good likelihood of most of the so-called neutrals and most of the Western nations except France and perhaps West Germany. Russia is of course a question, but by no means to be answered by a negative. One reason for the urgency of World control is certainly Red China and doubtless no one knows this better than the Kremlin. A half century ago there were many warnings of the "Yellow Peril." Like the warnings in Hitler's *Mein Kampf* they went unheeded, until in 1942 Japan swept over Asia almost unopposed. Shall the world now permit China with ten times the people and a hundred times the resources of Japan, with its "Yellow" intensified by "Red," to continue uncontrolled to develop nuclear arms? I believe Russia will welcome the help of the world. Their danger from an overflowing China is much greater than ours.

There is still another reason for urgency which has been perhaps too horrible for discussion in the polite society of disarmament conferences. Little wonder — for the results of bacterial warfare are if possible more gruesome than those of nuclear weapons. Now the ostensible bar to agreement on bombs and missiles is difficulty of inspection — for which we consent to delay while every year bacterial warfare moves closer to practical perfection — and is itself quite beyond the capacity of *any inspection* to control — a real case of straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. Ten years have been wasted fussing about inspection when just around the corner is a method of destruction of humanity that will entirely defy inspection if it is permitted to develop.

Bacterial warfare however is merely a portent of things to come. So long as the work of scientists is permitted to be perverted, new and more efficient methods of killing will continue to thwart the accomplishments of evolution and the purposes of Creation. Only by educating the peoples of the world can a non-controllable danger like bacteria be controlled. This is the secondary function of the Authority — to educate people to live and work together. Its primary function — preventing war — is merely to afford time for its secondary to accomplish the real task.





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# THE RABBIT THAT LOST ITS NOSE

L. W. Michaelson

There was Barney, the brown-nosed rabbit, and then there was the machine, the mechanism. Trim, efficient, smug, the machine with its slatted, eye-like vents for sucking in air, held Phocian's attention as he worked stacking the neat cylinders, checking the valves. It gave Phocian some vague sort of comfort to let his eyes wander first to the machine, and then to Barney. Barney was there just in case the machine became confused; Barney, with his high metabolic rate, his rapid heart beat, was not apt to be confused. He would merely die. The machine, when it sucked in an incorrect sample of oxygen, would not die, but simply sound its terrible, terrible claxon cry: a sound not too unlike Phocian's own private world. True, Phocian had heard the sound only once or twice, but it was an ugly sound, a twentieth-century sound that cut through the world's nonsense: "the dance-is-over" sound. And Phocian never forgot it.

Despite the claxon and its meaning, Phocian was not too unhappy working in the arsenal — an arsenal that manufactured nerve gas in some unthinking, mindless sort of way. It made Phocian feel more vital, more alive to be so close to instant death. Perhaps, he thought, he received as a fringe benefit, the same alert, tingling sensation a snake charmer must feel working with his basket of writhing cobras. It, the nerve gas, was not unlike the bite of a cobra. When the gas, odorless, colorless, sometimes leaked out of the cylinder containers, its effect was very much like the sting of a serpent, and the saying was around the plant that so-and-so "got bit" last month or last year. The gas attacked the nerve centers; one died of a paralyzed diaphragm.

To be sure, all kinds of precautions were taken at the arsenal so there would be precious few of the "bites" — but when one works in a flour mill, one gets flour on the clothes. The men in the cylinder division wore gas masks most of the time, and sometimes clumsy, uncomfortable rubber suits, for it was dangerous to wear wool or any fabric the gas could cling to. Phocian had been present at an "accident" only one time when Buff, the colored janitor, had stacked a few gas cylinders out of the way to make room for his sweeping. It was after hours and Buff had thus been careless about regulations and had neglected to wear his rubber suit.

In touching a tank, he somehow had jostled a valve, and the gas, in its insidious way, had nestled in Buff's wool sweater. Later on, pulling the sweater over his head in the plant locker room, Buff suddenly had dropped unconscious to the floor. There had not been enough gas to set off the warning claxon, or alarm Barney, but just enough to "bite" Buff. They worked on him: Ralph, the foreman, and Phocian. Ralph had quickly opened Buff's eyelids to see if the pupils were pinpointed, then started artificial respiration.

They took turns working on Buff as a drowned person, keeping him alive until the doctor arrived and performed a tracheotomy, and brought him back to the world, but it had been a narrow squeak.

When Phocian told his wife, Fanny, about the mishap (it had been kept out of the papers), she begged him once again to quit. She wrinkled up her forehead, and clutched one of her long, blonde-grey pigtails . "It all makes me feel like a wife of a jet pilot. I don't know if you're ever coming home for dinner."

Phocian had laughed and patted her on the bum. "But think of the extra money, honey. And the insurance. You get a clean $20,000 if I get a whiff of that gas — some punkins, eh? You can buy a fresh, clean boyfriend, a Caddy or two, and start life all over."



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"You like danger, uh?" his wife asked. "Great for me and the kids, not knowing if you'll come home on a slab blue and dead — dead for what? A few extra bucks a month?"

"Dead for a ducat dead," Phocian had said then.

"And you can can that Shakespeare jazz any time now," Fanny said, squinting her eyes, holding tight to one pigtail. "I used to think it was great you quoting Shakespeare and . . . and . . . the rest of them, but now . . ."

"Now what?"

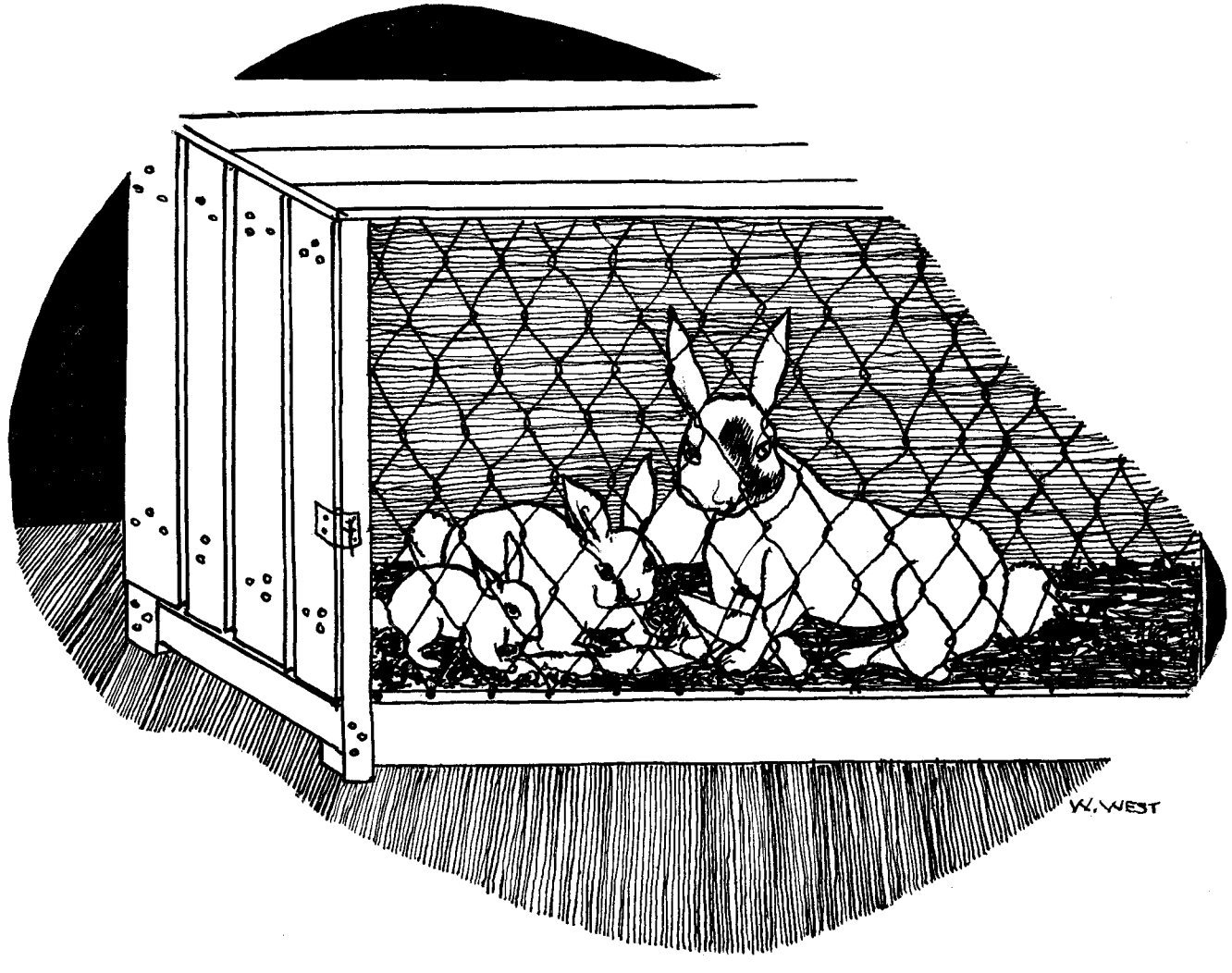
"I'll take a milkman who quotes baseball scores and who comes home at night in one piece."

"I've heard dangerous stories about milkmen, too," Phocian came back, and that ended the argument for the time being.

But no, it was not that: not the danger, not the money that kept Phocian on the job. What was it then? Sometimes he would ask Barney when he and Barney were all alone in the storage room, for to Phocian had fallen the job of last check up before the arsenal shut down each day. "Barney," Phocian would say, pressing his nose against the big cage that Barney shared with three other male rabbits, "why are we here?" Or was it Barney that asked the question? At times, Phocian wasn't quite sure.

Barney was a huge Belgian rabbit with an absurd brown-tipped nose that gave him a peculiar, clown-like expression. Barney was friendly, especially to Phocian who usually carried lettuce or carrots in his lunch box, feeding Barney and the others faithfully. Barney would hop over to the bars when Phocian appeared, his brown, clown-like nose twitching, his lustrous, pink-rimmed eyes looking trustingly at Phocian. "Barney, why are we here?" Barney had no answer but to approach the cage bars, his eyes full of love for Phocian.

Often, in the dim light of the cylinder room, Barney's brown-tip nose gave the impression that some of it — the vital part — was missing, for the rest of Barney was snowy white, and it appeared that the nose somehow stopped short of being a true nose. This illusion gave Phocian an uneasy feeling. "Barney, we need that nose



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of yours in here. We can't, indeed, have a comic nose, a false, artificial nose that won't tell us true." Then Phocian would feed Barney a carrot and reach out suddenly to touch Barney's nose to see if it was really there, and Barney would ease back out of reach, but rescuing the carrot in his mouth, unscathed by Phocian's touch.

Most of the time, however, it was fairly clear to Phocian why he was at the gas arsenal: because it was so pointless, so useless. The time, he remembered when he had wanted to be a poet, at a tender age it was, something like the boy Rolvaag. Like the Norwegian writer, Phocian had spoken up to his father bravely. "I want to be a poet." But Phocian's father had answered back: "But that's so useless in this day and age!" And failing, quickly, as a poet perhaps Phocian deliberately sought for a pointless occupation, for he had felt duty bound to oppose his father.

Phocian reflected that it was not the extra money, not the danger entirely. It was the utter absurdity that attracted him to the job. Like poetry, he reasoned, the job was a charming anachronism. The gas was first mixed and blended in huge metal tanks, special lead containers; then it was sifted down, blown through pipes to smaller containers where new substances were added, and finally it was piped into small, neat cylinders of an ideal size to be carried by planes and dropped or sprayed on an enemy. These cylinders were then shipped to so-called "strategic areas" of the country to be again stored in larger warehouses — very likely stored forever, as old poems are filed away, for the gas was no longer an efficient war weapon, as poems, Phocian felt, were no longer capable of arousing men's passions.

There wasn't any good purpose for the military to insist on its manufacture, for the gas was outdated, useless and dangerous to have around — very much like poetry. But perhaps it was good for psychological reasons: like piling up gold in Ft. Knox; it gave the country a vague sense of security. All this Phocian explained to Barney after hours as Barney stoically munched on a lettuce leaf. "I'm really a teller of fairy tales," Phocian said to Barney. "I frighten little children into being good."

But then, on practical days, Phocian would tell Barney: "The reason we are here, you goofy rabbit, is strictly money. Not so much money for me and carrots for you, but money for the big boys." Then Phocian would wink, confidentially, as if he were privy to top state secrets. Barney's comic brown nose would twitch at this, and Phocian would whisper, "You silly beast! I mean the chemical lobby at work in Washington!"

It was this aspect, too, that Phocian liked: the mindlessness of it all. The country, the military, kept piling up these endless cylinders of gas, which were dangerous and a nuisance to store, which were deucedly awkward to get rid of or destroy should the war danger suddenly be over with. In truth, it was a wonderful, absurd occupation, and at times Phocian felt some pleasure at being connected with it.

"We could build . . . ah . . . bowling alleys, make bubble gum, hospitals, free carrots for rabbits, anything! Eh, Barney? But no, we make deadly gas. And this is wonderful in a queer sort of way. Don't you see, you fathead rabbit? We got a real nutty world cooking here — after God's own black heart."

So Phocian's life went on in working, and in conversations with Barney, and in less pertinent conversations with Fanny.

Fanny, unlike Barney, would not twitch her nose, but twitch her fanny in a semi-seductive way and demand answers on practical things. But there was nothing to tell her; he was much in the position of Barney in this respect. Sometimes it seemed to Phocian that it was not so much a matter of defending his reason for having such a job, but defending his marriage, which, too, was rather absurd on the face of it.

He often wanted to ask Fanny, "Why are we here in this odd domestic setup?" But Fanny's behind would twitch when he got too philosophical and they would end up in bed, thresh-ing mindlessly, madly, between the sheets. There was, indeed, some answer in this, but Phocian didn't quite know what it was.

Domestic affairs with him were a problem, and like the job resisted easy answers. Phocian had always been a restless, rootless person, shifting from place to place. He had been a millwright as a young man, but this had gone out of style as millwrights were obsolete. Then Fanny had prevailed upon him to take a civil service exam, listing his millwright experience, and the government eventually decided he would be an excellent plant maintenance man in the gas arsenal: a man to check on the cylinders to see if the gas was blowing correctly from the large tanks to the small ones, if the valves were set tightly, and if the containers were trustworthy.



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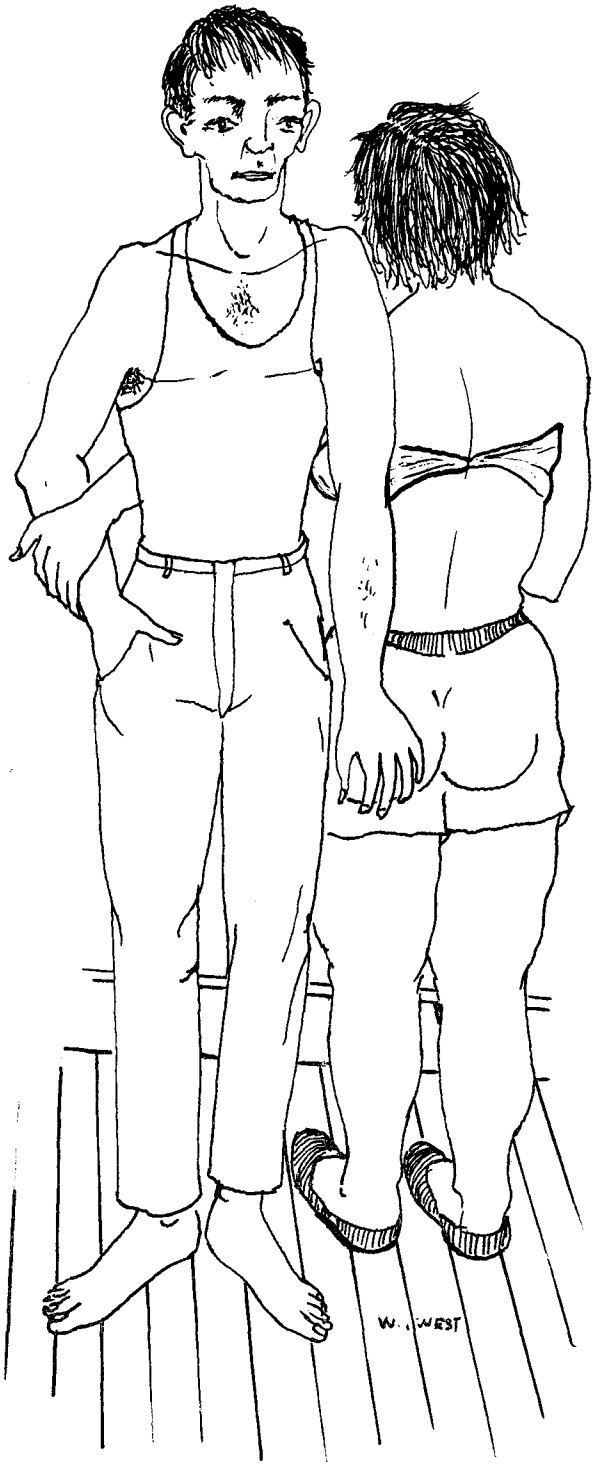
As for his marriage: this had been restless, rootless, too. He had met Fanny in a huge rabbit warren — Levittown. They had both been something like Barney, sniffing at the bars of their cages, asking questions, as to the why and how. Fanny had been married to a milkman; he was never home in the mornings, which was perhaps the downfall of everything, or perhaps the beginning. Phocian had an evening job, and was home alone in the mornings. His wife, Lisa, had worked as a school teacher. They had no children, but Fanny had one, Marcy. Then the Levittown sections were always throwing parties; Phocian found it was easy to drift into these "block parties" which sometimes turned into casual key-parties, or, to be more accurate, wife-trading parties.

Not that Fanny or Phocian had ever gone quite this far. Fanny had refused to toss her key in the pile. Or, if she had, Phocian was so drunk that one night he was a little vague about events, but he was pretty sure Fanny had kept her door double-bolted, so there was no hanky-panky then. Of Lisa's perambulations, he wasn't so sure.

Then, he had taken to going over to Fanny's in the morning to drink coffee and to complain about his job, his hangover, or Lisa. They had gotten to talking, and he to quoting Shakespeare, and one thing led to another. Here again there had been no final answers as to why he, Phocian, was in the brown house with the green porch, and she, Fanny, was some thirty yards away in a green house with a brown porch. And so to defy God, and his whimsical, mindless ways, they one day traded spouses. Quickly and neatly one morning, Fanny had packed her grips, taken Marcy, and left her husband, Frank. Her farewell note read, "Stew's on the stove and drop dead!" Phocian had merely locked the doors and left Lisa a note: "I've lost my mind."

And they had flown to Denver and the West and here they were, not in a rabbit-hutch housing project this time, but still rootless, unsettled, casual; and the basic questions went unanswered. They had actually married at the grave risk of bigamy charges, although they both had written several letters back to Levittown and had both received no answers. But Fanny did have much prettier eyes, deeper eyes than Lisa, and she did have a child, proof that she was, in the right sense, creative, and this seemed to give some reason for his move. And now they had a child of their own, Robert, age two, and life



seemed to have more meaning to Phocian than before.

But really this, too, was absurd. If his first wife, Lisa, had been fruitful, and he had not lived in Levittown with its green porches and brown-painted roofs, or green roofs and brown porches, would all this have happened?

— *But it is not good to question everything, everything.*

Phocian had been taught this last statement about questions in a dream. Phocian dreamed much more now that he was working in a gas



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arsenal. The dreams were not about twitching female behinds so much as about rabbits; mostly about Barney, the brown-nosed rabbit. Often he saw Barney in his dreams, hopping down a long, long hall. And he did have to admit that Barney's white flag of a tail looked somewhat attractive. So perhaps his dreams were still a bit Freudian, but not as much as when he had been living with Lisa in Levittown. Lisa's fanny didn't twitch at all, but was like some wax-white, flaccid hunk of lard, a lump of dough to be kneaded to his desires . . . hardly dream-provoking.

But there, anyway, was Barney in his dreams now, hopping down the long hallway. "Remember!" Barney says to Phocian in the dream, the oft-repeated dream, "Think not!" And then Barney disappears down a hole, much like the white rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland*.

"But your nose is gone," Phocian shouts after him in the dream, "and you have no watch! You *must* look at your watch!" Phocian shouts down the black hole Barney has scampered into, "for time is running out for both of us!" But there is no answer, except a vague sound from the tunnel which Phocian feels must be the phrase, "Think not! The eleventh commandment!" "But . . . but," Phocian stammers down the hole: "You have been reading *Moby-Dick*! And rabbits don't read Melville!"

And then Phocian always wakes up at this point, screaming aloud, "Rabbits don't read Melville!" over and over, and his wife shakes him and sometimes asks, "What about Melville?" And Phocian answers sleepily, "He's my boss down at the plant." And Fanny rolls over, twitching her behind, and goes fast asleep, and Phocian gets up to go to his job and Barney, not knowing quite which is the dream, and which is not.

Since the accident to Buff, the job, for Phocian, has taken on more of a dream-like quality. And once when the claxon horn sounded by mistake (Barney, Phocian said proudly at the time, never makes a mistake), and Phocian heard again that horrible, unearthly noise, and saw his colleagues stumbling around with their gargoyle-like gas masks on, he could not eat his lunch that day, and he walked the sandy, drear wastes outside the arsenal (for the plant was put far away from human kind), and walking in the desert, Phocian took the clarion call of the claxon as some personal summons to justify his life, to ask himself, once again, "What am I really doing here in this time and this place?"

Of course, there was no answer, only sand and dust blowing in his face, and so that same night with the soft bedroom lights on, he said aloud to his new-found god, The Claxon Horn, whose voice was the voice of Hell Made Real, "It is my hatred for humanity. It's nice to be busy at work, work like some malicious Machiavellian ant, piling up death and misery for human kind. That's why I'm here!"

But this tack didn't quite satisfy him, and as he drifted off to sleep, he said quietly in Fanny's ear, "I'm really mad at God. Yes! I have the impertinence to be angry. Mad at him for not giving reason or meaning to this life; that a job as a milkman or a poison gas manufacturer makes no damn difference!" Fortunately for domestic tranquility, Fanny was fast asleep.

Phocian stared then at his sleeping wife. If only he had been a poet, he would write a complaint to God that he, Phocian, was owed the dignity of being consulted before being set adrift on this raft, on this outrageous sea, to battle against what? Himself mostly? Maybe making gas to kill people somehow evened the score against God . . . gave purpose to his own, lone life? But then there was Barney the rabbit, and Fanny, and Marcy, and now little Robert. What had they to do with it? In truth, Barney especially had begun to get under his skin; his life depended upon Barney: machines were not to be trusted. A Barney sniffing the gas in time, Barney's pupils turning small, Barney rolling over stiff and dead — these were the things to give shape and substance to this world. Phocian told himself, over and over like a nun telling her beads, *Barney has a higher metabolic rate, his heart beats faster and he can detect odorless, mindless gas* THAT SEEPS THROUGH THE WHOLE WORLD STRIKING DOWN ITS CREATOR, MAN, IN A MINDLESS WAY, UNTHINKING, UNMEANING, UNCARING, UNLOVING AND LOVING BOTH.

It was true that Barney can detect the gas before the machine, before I, Phocian, can, and does this not mean, then, Phocian thought, that animals are superior to men? They can detect harm ahead of man, for did not the deer sense trouble, the rabbits streak away, before man and his gun stabbed their horizon? And was this not a world of guns?

It was after one of his dreams of Barney: Barney had seemed so real the night in ques-



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tion, and he had caught Barney this time before he could dart down his tunnel, and in this twilight world he stroked the soft fur, and felt for his funny brown nose that wasn't there, and he had awakened then, his hands on Fanny's pure white breasts. And she had rolled over and had said, "For God's sake, it's only six in the morning and it's time for your breakfast, and it's go-to-work time, not go-to-bed-and-grunt time!"

"You're so damn delicate about our sex life," Phocian had said in reply. And then Phocian had gotten up. But he remembered then that Barney had said something to him in the dream. "Think not," Barney had said again, and Phocian had caught him and, in the dream, had asked, "Why? Why think not?" And Barney had answered him something, oh, so wise, and so true! But Fanny's restlessness with his hands on her breasts had broken off the dream, and so it, what the rabbit had said, was gone now.

Phocian stumbled around the kitchen, getting his own breakfast and packing his lunch. He put in three carrots this time, for Barney, and he wondered why. And he thought even then, at seven in the morning, *this will be the last time — I won't have to go through this again! . . . the temptations of the flesh, and the food for Barney, and the going to work and the making of the deadly gas, and not hearing the answer to the vital questions.* But then he didn't know for sure, and he shrugged off this feeling. But at five o'clock when the quitting bell rang, Phocian knew that this was the last day: there was no sense going on, threshing on the bed with Fanny, feeding Barney, piling up cylinder after cylinder of poison gas.

At six p.m. Buff came around checking on things and Phocian was still there wondering how to go about the deed.

"Working late tonight?" Buff asked.

"Poison, poison everywhere, and not a drop to drink," Phocian answered.

"What's that you say, white boy?"

"I wonder if you could do me a favor? Can you drive to town for me and get coffee and sandwiches?" Phocian proffered a bill.

"Well, I have my sweeping to do, boss. Ain't this pretty unusual — you staying late this way? I mean, real late?"

"Just this once, Buff, and you can keep the change." It was a big bill and Buff hesitated, but not for long. "Here are the keys to my car," Phocian said, and then, in a minute, Buff was gone.

When Buff shut the door, a big, clanging, air-tight metal door, Phocian went quickly to the large cage. Shoving Barney unceremoniously aside, Phocian grabbed the other two rabbits by the ears and tossed them out the metal door into the desert waste. "Godspeed," he said. Then he took a cylinder of gas and climbed into the cage with Barney. "I have something here, Barney, that you will be interested in." Barney approached cautiously, hoping for a carrot.

"This is the gas, Barney, that was to prove to the world the Nazis were the master race." Barney, unimpressed, hopped to the far end of the cage. "I will turn this valve, Barney, and our pupils will pinpoint and our breathing will subside, and then . . . and then . . . this will prove to the world that . . . that . . . well, nothing."

Barney's comic nose twitched at this and his eyes looked at Phocian half with love, half with fear. "But Barney," Phocian said in half-hearted tones, "one of us has to play God." But then, suddenly, Phocian knew that his statement had been more of a question than an answer. And the wise thing that Barney had said to him in the last dream? Perhaps, Phocian thought, it is better not to have a nose in a world of evil smells. Just smile sweetly, Barney had said, and hope for a carrot instead of Buchenwald, and all will be well in time.

Clutching Barney to his chest, scrambling out of the cage, Phocian then took the gas cylinder, turned the valve and dashed it to the floor, shutting the huge metal door behind them. Safe outside, they both listened for the claxon's mournful sound, and, in a minute, the arsenal yard was full of armed guards.

"What the hell is going on here!" a watchman yelled.

"The . . . the sensor machine. I was just testing," Phocian yelled above the horn.

"We had no damn orders on an air test," a guard said. "I'll have to report this."

"Yes, I know," Phocian said.

"We'll have to get the decontamination squad in there. This all costs money."

"Yes, I know," said Phocian. "But it's worth it."

For his unauthorized testing of the air sensor, Phocian was summarily discharged. Somehow he managed to talk his superior into letting him keep Barney. "For a souvenir of a misspent life," Phocian explained.

"Well, I'll have to take him and them other two males out of your last pay check — plus



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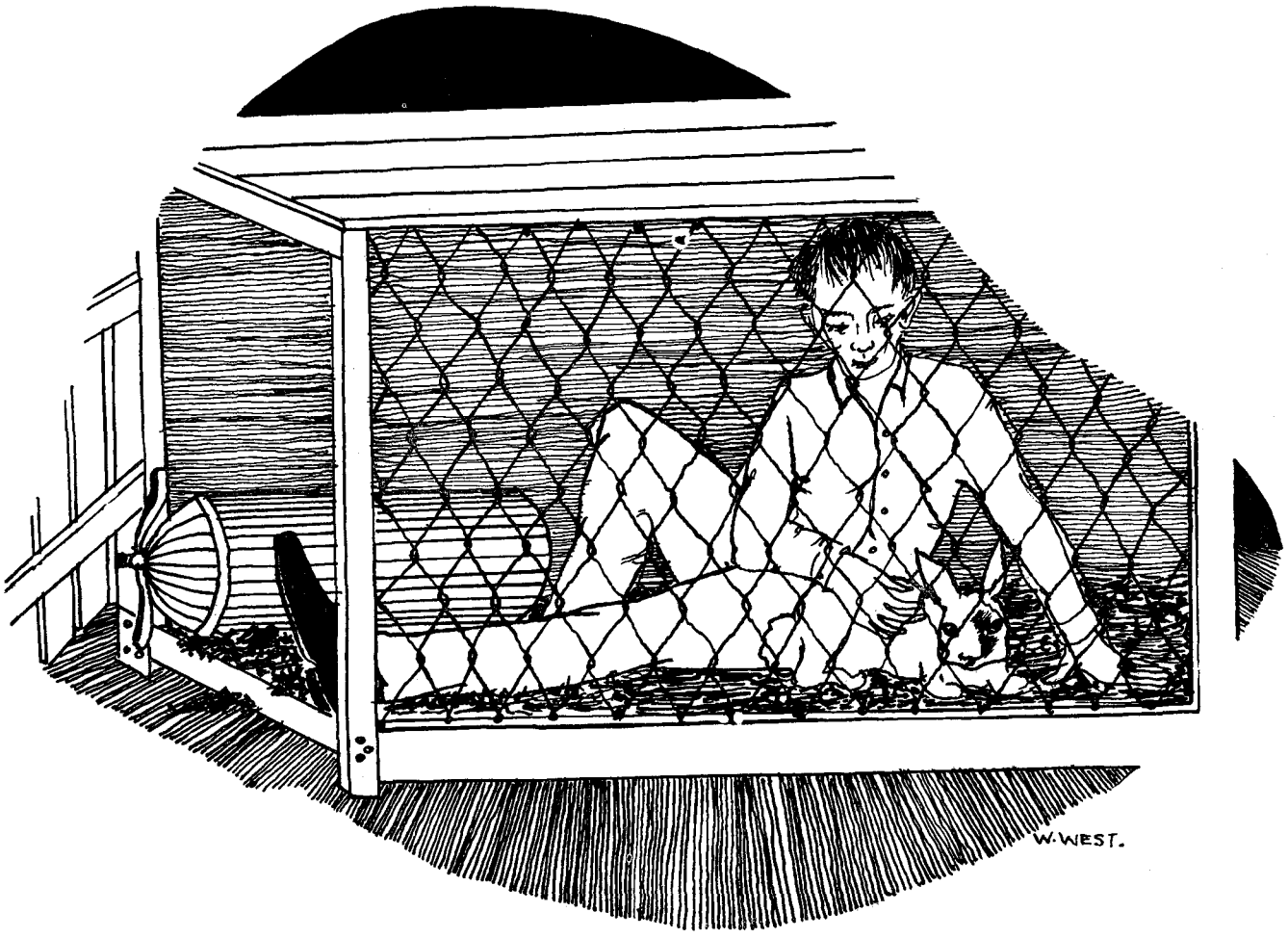


the decontamination squad costs. You'll have about enough money left for two beers."

"One for you and one for me, okay? And then Godspeed."

That same evening, as Fanny met him at the door, Phocian announced that he had been fired. "All I have to show for it is this one rabbit I brought home for little Marcy."

"Thank God!" Fanny said. "I'll go fix some rabbit stew and Marcy can learn to play with her head or something."

"Not this rabbit. He's had a bit of the gas. Ruins the meat forever."

Jobless, Phocian sat around the house for two weeks, feeding Barney, playing with Marcy and Robert. Marcy had been overjoyed with Barney. "But it looks like his nose is missing," she said.

"Never you mind," Phocian answered. "He don't need a nose around here."

One day Phocian said to Fanny: "Hell, you know? I don't think I'll ever go back to working."

"It just so happens," Fanny said, "I've about landed you a new job. My milkman, who is getting worried about the milk bill, says. . . ."

"Don't you go getting any ideas about milkmen. Not one of them can quote Shakespeare."

"Creep! I mean my *new* milkman tells me there's a job opening down at his plant."

"Nope. Too hard to jump from poison gas to milk for the kiddies all at once like. Gotta work down easy: machine guns, hunting knives, and then maybe to can openers. Better let me think it over."

"Well, they've got sort of a decontamination machine down there that warns when the fallout gets too high in the milk. Then it washes it out and cleans it up ready for drinking."

"So?"

"So, they need a maintenance man. You'd be ideal."

"How does this machine warn everybody about fallout?"

"How should I know. Rings a damn bell maybe. Blows a claxon horn like at the gas works." Phocian's face fell at this. "But I'm sure they'll let you change it," Fanny said.

"I'd like to hook up the 'Bell Song' from *Lakme*. You know, those beautiful little temple bells that go *tinkle*."

"I'm sure they'll let you hook up temple bells, Phocian baby. They're used to all kinds of kooks in a milk plant."



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# Ici Man Habla Inglis

Margaret Bennett

Now that English shows every sign of becoming the international language, most Americans see before them a brave new world of travel ease. They grow ecstatic as they picture an English-speaking waiter in every restaurant, an English-speaking driver in every cab, and an English-speaking direction-giver on every street corner. Not I. The whole prospect fills me with dismay. No good can possibly come of it.

It's not that my linguistic accomplishments put me in a class apart. On the contrary. I know only classroom French, phrase-book German, Dante's inscription over the gates of hell, and the words to *La Cucaracha.* Yet I never have the slightest difficulty getting along in any foreign country, except when I run afoul of someone who "speaks English."

My first memorable English-speaker was a cab driver in Mexico City. He picked me up in front of my hotel — a hotel famous for its drip-dry facilities and sterilized lettuce. Before assisting me into the taxi, he wrung his cap and inquired if I would mind eef ee paracteesed Eengleesh for me wile we rod. I said I wouldn't mind a bit, and all the way down the Reforma he paracteesed.

It warmed my heart to hear him tell of his ambitions to better himself by becoming a geed to show the sights of the toureests. At the end of the trip, I gave him an extra-large tip to encourage him in his studies.

I was still glowing from this human, little hands-across-the-border experience when I took the same route back to the hotel. This time I had a morose and taciturn driver who sucked a toothpick and uttered not a word during the trip. At its conclusion, by holding up fingers and adding the word *pesos,* he communicated the amount of the fare — exactly half what the linguist had charged.

Now I don't mean to imply that only people with larcenous intent learn English. Not at all. Many of the English-speakers are kindness and honesty itself. One Sunday morning after having tramped through the Sacré Coeur-Montmartre area, I stood panting at the top of the stairs leading toward the Rue Lepic. While resting, I opened my *Guide Michelin* to check the address of the restaurant I had picked out for lunch. When I looked up, I saw a little old lady in black hobbling toward me.

"You are lost," she stated, a smile flooding her wrinkled face. "I help you. I speak English."

"Thank you," I said, "but I'm not lost. I was just looking up the street number of the restaurant where I'm going for lunch."

"You want the lunch? You go to the Place du Tertre. Many restaurant there. Many artist paint. The tourist like."

"I've just come from there, thank you very much. I'm going to the Rue Lepic now."

She frowned. "Oh, no. Place du Tertre is not with the Rue Lepic. It is in the just different direction. Come. I show you."

She clamped her small hand upon my wrist and pulled me in the just different direction from where I wanted to go. To my each sound of protest she replied warmly, "It is no trouble. I am happy to help the lost tourist."

Of course, the most English-speaking breed of them all are the waiters. The majority of them can say, "Is good?" and "You finish?" but some go beyond these harmless expressions and plunge into the shark-infested depths of the language.

One evening in a Genoese restaurant built out over the Mediterranean on pilings, I sat admiring the sunset and anticipating the lobster I planned to have for dinner. When the waiter approached, I readied my index finger for ordering in my usual way — pointing at the items I wanted on the menu and making small international animal noises. As he handed me the menu, he smiled suavely and, with that uncanny knack that Europeans have for spotting my national origin, said, "Good evening. You are American. I speak English. I take your order."

I must admit that it was a relief to drop the menu and say right out, "I'd like a broiled lobster with drawn butter, a few green beans, a lettuce salad, and a half-bottle of dry, white wine."

The waiter efficiently transcribed my desires onto his pad as I spoke. "Fine," he said, snapping it shut. "I take care for you."

I settled back contentedly with the sunset,



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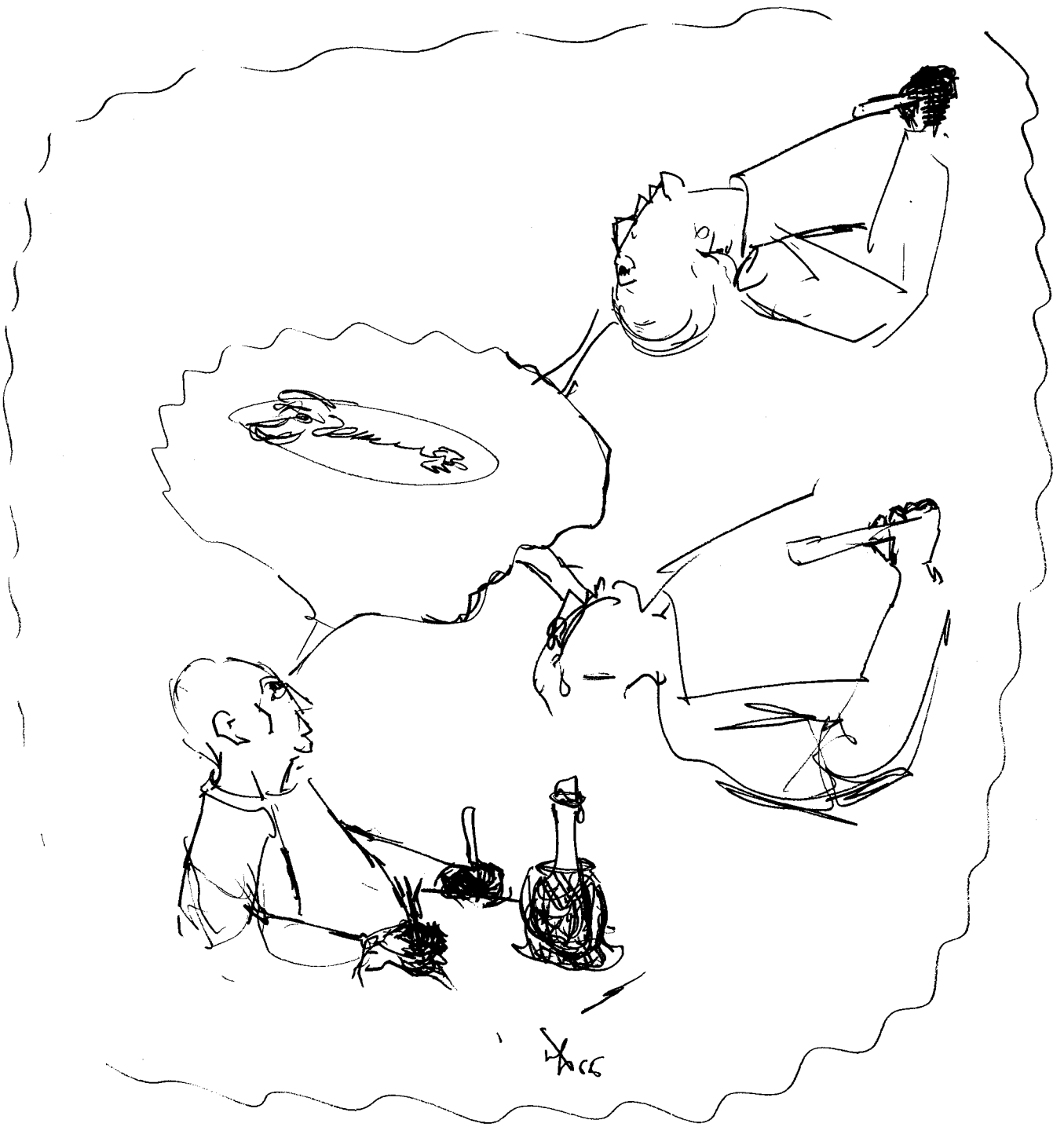
and even before the lights appeared on the bay, the waiter was back. He bore a bowl of buttered noodles with grated cheese, a plate of some type of fried sea insects with a mound of potato salad on the side, and a whole bottle of red wine. I started to protest, but when I stopped to consider the wall of English that stood between us, I changed my mind. When he asked, "Is good?" I replied, "Is good."

Although these experiences are quite bad enough, I have encountered my greatest difficulties with "English-speaking" people in the British Isles. There, everyone is convinced that he speaks English and proceeds to do so, rapidly and with utter disregard for the listener's confusion.

No, quaint and colorful though English may be, I dread the day when it becomes completely international. When I travel, surround me with people who speak only an obscure Serbo-Croatian dialect and can't even say "OK." With them, I know I can communicate.





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KIBROTH-HATTAAVAH

1

Moses' people glare
In a cloud of flesh. Quail storming in
A dark cloud off the desert sea
And numerous as the sea sands, flocking to the camp.

Falling on the packed land . . . like dust
The feathers floated in the sunny air
When the women waded through the quail,

Salty plump and blood-damp
And heaped them home. The men arose to nail
Them to dry round about the camp.

They wrung the quail and hung them outside
Their tents in the arid silken air.
And all their thoughts pursued the wives, the brides.

The flat sun shrank behind the flapping birds.
When had the men heard these lusty laughs?
When had they seen their slim women

Laugh and stumble to run
Back into the still pavilions, those quail
Flopping across their hips? —

Elders swore God answered the long denials,
Stupid threats, or oaths, with these fowls.
For the others, the slender women
Would answer their handsome desire.

2

Then the tribe gathers out as One to feast.
The birds that flew from heaven
Are picked down, plucked, singed. Cedar stakes driven
Into the earth. The boys split tinder.

They thrust spears through the quail. Cut the staffs
And mount the short poles in the spit frames to turn
And turn the fowls roasted over the flames.

These men crowding through the tribe's stench
Of its hunger, these who hurl and hack
Their boys back to cower with the women,

Breaking a broad trail amid the amazed
Gossips and girls, to the cooking ground —
These men are great, eager and staunch

And steaming pink in the dinner heat . . .
They shoulder each against each. They lean to quench
Their thirst for the fowl's scent. They inhale over a spear spit

The pitchy clouds of ash and smoke
Billowing up from their char pit
That blows like a burning bog of peat.

In the dry brown vapor their tongues swell.
They'll root loose among the tilled coals
And crowd, fat flank to shoulder,
And eat with the hot hogs of hell.

3

The tearful men, choking in the smoke,
Throw the poles off the fire. And slice the birds.
The quail meat gleams with heat; a fleshy gloss.
The meat burns their flying palms. They flap and toss,

They scream with a happy hunger,
Who braved their Lord with their faith
Unless he would feed them flesh.

These grown huge with the daily bread
Of heaven lunge on the quail meat
And their teeth rip it from the frail bones.

The banquet of God
Was a gift of wrath
And God fed them death.

While the fowl was still in their teeth
Many blissful men fell, belly-sick,
Struck down in the joy of their stomachs.

God roaring, black angry
Because a man craves
All he can reach.

The fattest ones died first.
The tribe dug their graves
Where they'd cooked. And said they left
These men in the graves of lust.

*George Keithley*



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# NOBODY KNOWS ME

Walter Youngquist

"NOBODY KNOWS ME." THE CO-ED SLUMPED DOWN IN A CHAIR IN MY OFFICE, AND A HINT OF TEARS APPEARED. TWO DAYS LATER, A BOY CAME INTO MY OFFICE AND SAID, "I'M LOST." THIS IS NOT A PROBLEM JUST AT THE UNIVERSITY IN WHICH I WORK. IT IS A MAJOR PROBLEM IN OUR MASSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY. STUDENTS ARE PUNCH CARDS. AND EDUCATION IS GOING TO GET RAPIDLY EVEN MORE MASSIVE AS THE FLOOD OF STUDENTS HITS US. THE TIDE IS JUST BEGINNING TO COME IN.

Professors lecture to classes of two hundred to five hundred or more with the aid of microphone and loud speaker. Graduate students, concerned primarily with their own course work, mechanically grade the papers, or the papers are actually graded by machines. The professor smiles at all the students he meets as he walks across the campus because he doesn't know which students are in his classes and which are not. They all know him; he doesn't know them.

A student has taken or is taking a course from a professor. The student comes into the professor's office to ask for a recommendation in connection with an application for a summer job. The student has the illusion that the professor knows him. The professor cannot recall, or at best usually can only vaguely recall, seeing the student and knows nothing about him. His record may show he has been attending class regularly although roll is not usually taken in many large classes. An exam or two indicates the student made, or is making, a "B" or "C" in the course. The student exists. The professor can vouch for that.

I know these things happen, because they all have happened to me and to my colleagues. A classic case I heard of was one where the parents came down to the campus in midwinter to visit their son from whom they had not heard for several weeks. College students do not write home as often as they might so this was not unusual. However, the student couldn't be located. His professors had him in large classes and hadn't missed his face from among the hundreds before them. Nobody else was specifically concerned about the student. By various devices the student's trail was picked up, and it led to Mexico where the student had been sunning himself for more than a month! Most universities make a reasonably conscientious effort to keep track of students, but with the increasing numbers of bodies somebody is bound to get lost in the shuffle. Students seize on this circumstance occasionally to provide the base for the time-honored prank, usually a fraternity project, of sending some mythical student or perhaps a dog through school by paying his fees, and having various students sit in for him to take exams, write English themes, and what have you. I don't believe this would be possible at very many, if any, of our quality smaller colleges. Students there are individuals and no dog could make Phi Beta Kappa. He would be detected early in his academic career.

We are engaged in mass education, and individuals are being submerged in this mass. Students begin to feel they no longer count as individuals, and they must act in masses to be recognized. This is a source of growing trouble on our campuses. As populations increase, both

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in universities and out of universities, this feeling of being submerged in a mass is a cause of many problems in the world today. The individual no longer counts.

Last week I was offered a job at a state university where the enrollment is officially predicted to *more than double the next four years!* Previous predictions have been consistently wrong — on the low side. One of the stated attractions for taking this position was that I would get in on the ground floor of a great growth situation, but who wants to get in on the ground floor of an avalanche!

We have always been a nation that admired bigness: big cars, big airliners, big dams, big football players, big factories, and big universities. Many small colleges have in the past ten years joined the stampede to be called a "university." It smacks of something more magnificent than just being a "college." "Royal Oak College" is now "Royal Oak University." A few colleges (and some of the better ones) have stayed colleges. I think they can be proud of this title.

But what about the girl who said, "Nobody knows me." She comes from a home where her parents know and love her. She is known in her community, and even if her high school had a thousand or more students in it, she still could be an individual. All her high school teachers got to know her by the time the term was out. This is not so at the great university she attends.

There is a thing called "student-faculty ratio." It consists of a number derived from dividing the number of faculty into the number of students. A university may have a ratio of 15 to 1. A small college is likely to have about the same ratio. How is it, then, that the student at the big university is lost? The answer is that at the small college the 15 to 1 ratio is a true and functioning ratio. At a large university with tremendous research facilities and concerned to a very considerable extent with research and graduate education, many professors engage in highly specialized projects and teach highly specialized courses which involve relatively few students. In one department, one professor met a total of 500 students during the term; another professor met 22. Both were regarded as full-time professors in that department. And these figures do not represent the extremes by any means. A few professors lecture to huge classes of undergraduate students. The 15 to 1 ratio in this case is only theoretical. In the small college it is real. Research is important. And perhaps the professor at the big university is a more high-powered person in his profession than his college counterpart, but if he doesn't meet students, he cannot impart his knowledge to them. Cases are legion where a "big name" professor attracts students only to have the students find that the "big name" is inaccessible to most of them. The *Wall Street Journal,* writing on the effects of the research surge on campuses, quoted one professor as saying, "The less you see of students, it seems, the higher your salary and the greater your reputation."

How does the professor react who meets the big classes? I have asked numerous colleagues to check my own observations and they bear me out. Somewhere between 125 and 175 students, I pass a point in number where I lecture to a sea of faces and not to individuals. If a professor meets 300 students during a term, and each student came to see the professor for just 15 minutes each month, this would account for 4500 minutes of the professor's time. This is 75 hours, which converted to an eight-hour working day allowing a half hour a day for personal needs, means the professor would have to spend ten solid days just talking with stu-



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dents. There are about 22 working days (Monday-Friday) each month. Giving each student just 15 minutes a month means nearly half the time the professor would be talking with students. The professor usually will work some evenings and most weekends. But he still cannot get everything done and give the students much consideration. How can he possibly meet his classes, prepare his lectures properly, read the journals to keep up with new discoveries in his field, go to committee meetings, handle the 1000 and 1 departmental matters of ordering equipment and supplies, fill out myriad forms for the administration, answer letters of all kinds, do research and write up the results and present papers before meetings of his own particular learned societies, direct graduate student theses, and give speeches to the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs? The list goes on and on. It is the official policy at some state universities that promotion is based on "teaching, research, and public service." One is expected to effectively engage in all three activities during the term. Obviously, the professor cannot do it. When a choice is made, the result commonly is that students are allowed to see the professor rarely or for exceptional reasons only . The professor has no choice.

What can we do about this? Not much. This is the way giant higher education operates. I don't think it is likely to change very soon. Fed by massive Federal grants, the pressure in our big universities is for more and more production of research. Teaching is not the honored art it once was. The rewards go to those who can get "grant money" (the modern magic words in universities). But to get grant money, you must have already done significant research while you are a full-time teacher. The other day one of my colleagues, who handles up to more than 600 students a term, said to me, "I've got to shut myself up in my office and get out some sort of a quick paper so I can apply for a grant — and I hate myself for even thinking this way." Faced with the "publish or perish" method of promoting (or firing) staff members, students sometimes are seen as a hindrance to a professor's career.

Do professors like this situation? Some do; students count for little. Some professors do not like it. A few of my colleagues feel so strongly about it that they send their own children at considerable expense to smaller colleges when they could much more easily and cheaply send their children through the universities in which they themselves are teaching. Some universities, such as the one I work in, try to recognize this problem in some way. Through the leadership of one thoughtful Dean in particular, we have set up an "Honors College" where superior students are segregated into smaller classes and given personal attention. But this accommodates only a few of the total number of students on our campus, and probably does not reach those students who need personal attention the most.

How does all this relate to the role of our small colleges in America? For certain technical studies even to just the bachelor's degree (various fields of engineering, for example), smaller colleges cannot offer what our great universities can in terms of either highly trained and high priced technical staff, or high priced equipment. And a large university is almost a

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from THE TRUE ADVENTURES OF STEPHEN PARKER

GOING OFF:
*In Which Our Hero Departs*

At twenty, I found my life
Entirely without life.
Even the best of my prospects
Were less than I could expect.
So thinking I would go forth,
From my place of birth,
I resolved to set out,
From my dear parents' house,
Into the world as large
As life, to find a change.

The night before I left
Home, nobody slept.
My mother worked all night,
Certain this was silly
Of one so delicate
And prone to melancholy.
She made me a special coat.
My father gave me his best
Genuine split-cowhide valise,
Although he almost wept

When I got on the bus,
Stephen, they called, Stephen,
Be careful, write, and then
I waved an uncertain wave
As the bus began to move
Away from the very gentle
Faces of family and friends
Come to see me off.
I thought that by going off
I would come to life.

*Stephen Parker*



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"must" for graduate work. But in many fields, the small college can offer more than the big school. It can offer the chance for a boy or girl to be an individual, at a most formative time in their lives.

I have heard professors say that a student will either make it or he won't. Let him loose in a university and he either passes or fails regardless of how much or how little concern is shown him. I do not believe this is the case. There are all

gradations between these extremes. The record clearly shows that many students, given varying amounts of personal consideration and encouragement, will develop much more than they would have otherwise. Even some of the Presidents of the United States (including Lyndon Johnson) have cited the friendly interest of a teacher as one of the great turning points and incentives in their lives.

I recall with pleasure the times I sat in a rowboat on Lake Washington in southern Minnesota on Saturday afternoons with my zoology professor, Dr. Elson (Ph.D., University of California at Berkeley), catching perch for dissection in Monday morning's zoology lab. I learned more in that rowboat than I did in class. When I finally went on to graduate school at a big university, I found very little difference in professor-student relationships from what I had already experienced. Graduate school at a large university was much like undergraduate work had been for me. Graduate students are individuals at great universities. I was fortunate in going to a small college where I was an individual as an undergraduate, and I have never felt in my college career that "nobody knows me" or that "I'm lost."

The record of the quality small colleges in producing distinguished alumni has been outstanding. One reason, I am sure, is that the small college cultivates the individual personality; the student can emerge instead of being submerged. People care for him as an individual and he knows it; and knowing that people care is important.

The U.S. Department of the Interior recently put out a booklet entitled "The race for inner space." As our population increases, and living is more crowded, places where individuals can still retain their identity decrease in number. But students are still individuals at our colleges. May it never be otherwise! Most of the faculty are there because they believe in this principle, among others. You can walk into a professor's office and ask about your son or daughter — even when they are in the "big freshman class" — and the professor will know your child. I hope you recognize this is an increasingly rare circumstance.

We need great universities. They have an undisputed place. Also, some of our giant schools are themselves recognizing that one of the biggest problems in modern society is the preservation of the identity of the individual, and smaller educational units (*e.g.* Honors Colleges) are being established within these big schools. This approach is only partially successful, however, and it must fight what is currently a losing battle with an onrushing tide of students. But the small college has held the answer all along. We need more quality small colleges. We need to support those we have, because the chief concern of our small colleges is still the student.



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# Pig and the Wind

Robert Chamblee

Sometimes even now — especially on a fall night when the wind whines down the asphalt paths of the park and rips leaves from trees along Riverside Drive — I wonder if that voice I used to hear could have been merely South Carolina wind. I remember well the first time that I heard it. It came from beyond the pine ceiling in the kitchen of the brown shingled house where I was born. In the sharp voice it was always to use, it said my name and nothing more: "Roy!"

It was winter. And in the northwest corner of our county, where the Blue Ridge mountain range trickles to an end at the top of the valley, the winter wind goes right to the bone. At least it did last year when I went back to visit. (I didn't stay overnight, when the wind is worst, but by four in the afternoon the wind was already screeching around the house, jostling loose shingles. Bermuda grass stubble crunched under my shoes as I walked across the yard when I was leaving, and everything about the ground seemed numb and cold.)

I don't remember those early winters as cold ones, though. It must be because Pig was always so warm. Even on those nights when the wind would rattle every window in the house, my brother never got cold. It was his nature. Very few things in this world really upset Pig except cold feet and my profanity. That, and possibly pain.

"Get your cold feet off my back," he'd say after I had run from the fireplace and jumped into bed.

"Christ, Pig. I'm cold." I was nine and he was thirteen.

"How many times I told you to cut out that swearing, Roy? You keep it up and you can just get out of here and sleep on the cot."

"Hell fire, I hear Papa say it."

By the time he finished talking about whichever Commandment it is that mentions parents, I would be warm and too drowsy to answer. Rolled into a ball, I'd pretend to be asleep.

"I know you're playing possum."



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At morning we woke up at the same time.

"God almighty! Listen to that wind."

"I don't want to be around nobody swearing all the time." Pig would run in his long underwear to the fireplace and pull on his overalls and buckle his boots.

It was on one of those mornings, when the kitchen windows were steamed over, that I first heard that voice.

"Roy!" It was a quick, crisp call. I stopped eating my oatmeal and stood up.

"Wait," I said to Pig. He was moving a kettle back on the stove with one hand to make room for the boiler of cocoa he held with the other. "I'll push it back."

"You finish eating. I don't need your help."

"Then for Christ's sake why'd you call me?"

"Nobody called you." Just then the boiler of cocoa slipped out of his hand. Cocoa sizzled across the top of the wood burning stove and the thick, hearty smell of chocolate filled the kitchen. Some of the cocoa splashed on Pig's newly ironed overalls and Lily Mae, our colored "raiser" (her authority was absolute; she was no mere "housekeeper"), came out of the pantry and told Pig (1) to keep away from her stove and (2) to go put on a clean pair of overalls.

"Nothing but a dab," Pig said.

"You get in there and change them overhalls. No young 'un from this house is going to school looking like a field hand."

The cocoa had seeped through the denim onto the legs of Pig's long johns, but he only changed his outer layer. He was using only his right hand to transfer his knife and things from his dirty overalls.

"Did you burn your arm?"

"None of your business. Next time don't come meddling around me," he said.

"How come you call me if you don't want me to help?"

"Nobody called you. You always making things up."

"I don't know what's got into you." I went back to finish breakfast.

Lily Mae ran a wash rag over our faces and gouged it into our ears before we left the house. Then Pig and I went to the barn and he saddled Mickey. That morning he couldn't pull the belly band as tight as he usually did and I couldn't help: nobody could saddle Mickey except Pig. The only thing needed to set her off into a fit of rearing up was for me to come too close. Pig might have broken her of her crazy streak eventually if she hadn't hurt her leg the previous summer. After she fell and developed a knot on her knee, Pig let her have her way. The knee still hurt her in bad weather, so on cold mornings we left home early enough to get to school on time without making Mickey trot. After Pig saddled Mickey he would stroke her head and talk to her for a while. Only then would she deign to let me get on her back behind the saddle, and off we would ride to school.

Mickey's hitching post was a tree behind the schoolhouse. After he had fastened the horse's reins to the tree that morning, Pig took the bit out of her mouth and then started to wrap his wool scarf around the knot on Mickey's knee. The scarf kept falling to the ground because Pig was trying to tie it with one hand and couldn't get it tight.

"I'll tie it for you," I said. "If you burned your arm why don't you put some salve on it, for Christ's sake?" I squatted beside him.

"Roy!" Again that call. It came clear and loud from the tree. I looked up. Mickey's head was high in the air, her black mane was blowing in the wind and her front hooves were pawing the air. I turned and ran and when I looked around Pig was under Mickey's front feet, holding his arms over his face. This was more than Mickey's usual contrariness; she was straining at her rein, walleyed in terror. Some people came running and quieted the horse and we took Pig into the schoolhouse.

Pig's collar bone was broken. The doctor said they would have to take him to the hospital ten miles away to x-ray his chest.

Pig was home a week before he went back to school. "How come you scared Mickey?" he asked me one day.

"That's fine thanks I get for trying to help you. Anyway, weren't me she was scared of."

"Then what?"

"I don't know. But there was something."

That year Pig missed the entire basketball season. The season had been over a month before they took the cast off his shoulder. He wasn't much good for baseball that summer, either. Usually nobody in the county could hit a ball farther than Pig could.

Breaking his collar bone seemed to start a chain of accidents for Pig. Twice that summer he got beaned. Once, just before school let out for the summer, we were playing behind the schoolhouse and Pig was at bat. I was standing near the catcher. I heard my name called.

"What did you say, Pig?"



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He turned around as the ball was thrown and it caught him square on his head. He put his hands over his face and came to the tree and squatted at the base of it. He didn't make a sound. I knew better than to go near him. Later that summer they were playing baseball in back of our smokehouse. I was skinning the cat on the branch of a chinaberry tree. Again I heard my name called. Again I looked toward Pig. Again he got hurt.

That night I told Pig about hearing the voice. He said I was crazy. "I swear to God. Somebody keeps calling me."

"I don't wonder," he said. "Unless you cut out swearing you'll hear more than voices."

One Sunday afternoon he got his shirt sleeve caught in the cog wheel of the ice cream freezer he was turning. In trying to get it out, he cut a deep gash in his arm. That day I was in the kitchen and again the voice called me from behind the ceiling. I ran to the back porch where Pig was.

"There's haints in this house," I told him.

"Quit making things up. People'll think you're out of your mind."

"I'm telling you the goddamn truth. There's haints in there."

"Then it's cause you're cursing all the time. I told you you better stop."

"I'll stop."

I actually *did* stop going into the kitchen alone. Now and then Pig fussed about the way I talked during the following winter. He was on the first string of the basketball team that year. I held his overalls while the game was on. The basketball court was outdoors and the team wore blue and white uniforms donated by the Lions Club. I would lean against the tree and watch the game. The voice called my name a time or two. It always presaged one of Pig's mishaps — a sprained ankle or a fall. Truth to tell, Pig was clumsy on the court, but he was still the best player in the county. Everybody said so. One thing is sure: he was the biggest.

"Hot damn," I used to say to Pig when I gave him his clothes, which he pulled on over his basketball uniform after a game, "you showed 'em that time."

We had to forfeit a game that year: I hit Antreville's guard with a rock. Two times he had snatched the ball from Pig in that game, and once made him look like a fool by thrusting the ball toward him, then pulling it back quickly as Pig grabbed for it. Everybody laughed. Toward the game's end Pig was about to shoot and the guard, a tall boy with red hair and big teeth, grabbed his arm and spun him around. The referee blew his whistle because of the foul, but I had beaned the guard before the whistle stopped blowing.

"You got the devil in you," Pig said on the way home. "I honestly don't know what's going to become of you."

In any ledger of Pig's accident proneness, the first truly grave entry must be made for the following summer. He fell from the front of a hay wagon. One of the mule's hooves grazed the side of his head and his arm was broken when a wheel of the wagon rolled over it. It happened at sunset on the last load of the day. I was bringing water up the hill from the spring when I heard somebody calling to the house. But there was no warning call from the voice. I dropped the buckets I was carrying and ran up the hill. Pig was unconscious and very bloody when they brought him into the house. They wouldn't let me into the room where he was. An ambulance — black, of course — came and they carried Pig out on a stretcher which had shiny, wire-spoked wheels. The ambulance made hardly a sound as it crept over the pebbles on the dirt road. Lily Mae took me to her house to spend the night.

When we went to see Pig the next morning he was covered with white bandages. His face was swollen and blotched with red medicine.

"I'll go kill them goddamned mules, Pig. I'll go kill every one of them sons-a-bitches."

"Roy, don't swear," he said, and held out his hand. "You want to help me? Then don't swear, you hear?"

That afternoon I walked to the church at the crossroads, two miles from home, and struck a bargain: I would never utter another vile word if Pig just got well.

And I didn't. In fact, I got into only one or two fights between then and the time Pig graduated from high school. But bad words? Not one. After Pig graduated, I had no fights at all. They even elected me secretary of the R.A. Club (Royal Ambassadors for Christ). Pig stopped having accidents and the voice quit calling. That fall I went to Furman University to study accounting and on homecoming weekend Pig came over to see the game. Before he left to catch the train back home he said he was glad I had not turned out to be one of the sheep. "The way you talk," he said. "Not like them other boys."

"But they're good guys. They talk that way just to be one of the guys. It's like knowing the



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password so they'll accept you." Pig didn't understand my explanation.

When I went home for Christmas, Pig and I took the Treppler sisters to the square dance. Elise, who had finished school the same year Pig had, sat with him in the front seat of the Ford, with plenty of room on her right. When she whirled around to me at the dance, I could feel how warm she was at her waist as I spun her about. She smelled as nice as sweetpeas as we "sala*aman*ed left and sala*aman*ed right."

After the dance was over and the younger (and fatter) Treppler girl and I had climbed into the back of the two door Ford, I remembered that I had left my cap inside.

"It's a good thing your head is tied on, boy," Pig said. 'I'll go get it. Too much bother for you to get out."

While he was gone Elise showed us the Evening-in-Paris compact Pig had given her for Christmas. She switched on the overhead light so that we could see it. She certainly felt at home in that car, I noticed.

"Isn't that *cute*?" her sister said.

I got one or two letters from Pig between Christmas and the time I came home for Easter vacation. Pig's unvarying opener: "I am fine. Hope you are the same. We have had a lot of rain (or no rain)." At the end of the vacation, on a hot Sunday afternoon when wisteria vines had started to bloom along fences and bumble bees droned around them like mourners, Pig drove me to the railroad station. On the way we stopped to pick up Elise. The Treppler family were sitting on their porch when we drove up. I waved to them and waited in the car while Pig went to get Elise. She was wearing a white dress, with little blue dots all over it, made of material so thin that I could see through it to the straps of her petticoat. After he started the car Pig said, "New shoes?"

"Why, yes. I'm surprised you noticed," she said. She wore sandals which were the same color of blue as the dots on her dress.

"I don't call a couple of straps like that much of a shoe," Pig said.

"Oh, you men!"

"It seems that anybody with feet as cold as yours would want more than that to cover them up."

"Summer's coming, silly."

Elise's left hand was resting lightly on Pig's shoulder. "Your feet get cold, too?" I asked.

"Cold feet?" Pig said. "Why, when, she puts her foot in your back it's worse than yours used to be when . . ." Pig looked over toward me. Our eyes met, then he quickly turned his attention back to the road. "Look at that orchard. Old man McGregor sure knows how to keep a orchard."

When we got to the depot Elise opened her Evening-in-Paris compact and took out the wafer of a powder puff and dabbed at her nose with it. We all got out and Pig and Elise walked ahead to the platform while I got my suitcase from the back seat. As I was about to close the door I saw the round, gold compact that Elise had left on the front seat. I picked it up and quickly put it in my trouser pocket.

I carried my Gladstone bag to the one passenger car that was on the P&N and set it just inside the door leading into the car from the back steps. When I came back out, one of those sudden gusts of wind that sweeps in from the mountains blew my cap off.

"Watch it, boy," Pig said as he caught the cap.

"All aboard," the conductor called.

"We're going to come down and get you when the semester's over," Elise said. "Don't you be trying to pack up everything in teeny old bags to bring home on the train. Let us know when to come, you hear?"

Pig clasped my shoulder with his hand, big and warm. "Take it easy," he said.

"You, too," I said, going up the steps of the red, wood passenger car. As the train pulled out I leaned out the window and waved to Pig. Pig — black hair, green eyes, white shirt, plaid tie open at the throat — had his arm around Elise's waist.

I went back to my bag and took a book out of it. By the time I returned to my seat we were out of the city limits and the train was clicking over the rails through newly planted cotton fields. When I sat down I felt Elise's compact bulge in my pocket. I took it out and threw it as hard as I could against one of the telephone poles whipping past. The compact smashed open and the mirror sprayed a quick burst of light.

That was the week that I heard the voice call my name again after so many years of silence. The day was dark, but it wasn't raining and I don't remember hearing any thunder. Professor Jackson had just started his psychology lecture (not about accident proneness, thank God) and the wind was blowing crepe myrtle branches against the windows. I looked out the west window, toward home, and all of a sudden I heard it.



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"Roy!" As sharply as ever, as distinct, it was the same voice.

"Oh, Christ!" I said aloud and jumped to my feet and looked at the ceiling.

"A nightmare?" Professor Jackson asked. "I thought students had only pleasant dreams sleeping in my class." Everyone laughed and the lecture continued.

"That was not profanity," I said under my breath.

A long distance phone call came for me during the following class. It was the first time I had ever been called out of a class for anything. I always envied pupils in high school whose parents came to get them out of class to take them to the fair or to the circus. And at college some athlete or other was always being called out to get ready for the big game. That day as I ran across the campus to the dean's telephone, I thought how important the students must think *me* at that moment. At first the idea of the phone call had all but paralyzed me, then I couldn't, wouldn't think about it. With the wind blowing my hair and my glasses clouding over, I wanted to damn our Piedmont weather. Surely there is a place where the climate is perfect, I thought.

There is no such place, of course. Going home on the Greyhound bus that afternoon — the P&N ran only twice a day and the last train had left at 2:40 — I tried desperately to summon up everything I knew about the climates of the world. I've found out a lot about them since then. No one place is much better than another. Mexico is unbearable. Canada is horrible. California feels all right at first, but then the people get you. Such desperate efforts to prove they're having a good time! Cannes? Another Coney Island. Miami? At night the wind blows and the sand stings, and I hear it's the same in Rio.

And at our farm in the Piedmont, by the time I got there on the first day I was ever called out of a class, the gentlest breeze I ever felt stirred the hollyhock stems that still stood around the crumpled barn that a tornado had blown down. It was a plank blown from the barn that had gone through the back of my brother's head. One side of our house had been blown off, too, so they kept Pig's body at the mortuary until it was time for the funeral service at the church.

I was with my aunt in the second car of the cortege that waited at the crossroads for the hearse to arrive from the town. Careful plans

THE SANITARIUM IN THE SEASONS

*and I saw spirits moving among the flames*
Purgatorio, XXV

White flurries immerse
the town in wet, sheer
folds, torn in the lake's cold air —
What are a man's sins
to Christ, if he keeps the peace?
Sleep the afternoon,

Wake O hear the robin sing
in the maple, It is Spring!

The breezy day nurse
skips as her sweater
spins away from her shoulder.
May. The tracking wind
all night high east after geese
at dawn dropped the moon.

Red squirrels sparking the trees
irritate the summer ease.

As a blue-jay screams
in the oak the priest
brings bread. Down the asphalt drive
the gardeners' fire
warmly floats leaves to the loud
bird flying the oak.

Doctor, if I name terror
an island the sea is fear.

I recall few dreams.
Yet coffee, the creased
papers. 8/6/45
Washington's wire
transmits a hot skyward cloud
and the peace is smoke.

Christmas, Lent, the cool days drift,
overnight the seasons shift.

An April snow drapes
the motor-test wing,
the clinic garden at dawn.
Out the window loft
ice hangs over the phlox stalks
and the patio.

Morning and my moderate
consommé, a cigarette —

At noon in blue capes,
blue gloves and legging,
the nurse interns stroll the lawn.
A slender girl coughs.
In the white weather she walks
as thin as the snow.

*George Keithley*



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had been made for the hearse and funeral procession to arrive at the crossroads at the same time, but the hearse was late. After five minutes or so the driver of the mortuary's black limousine lit a cigarette. "Jeez," he said, "this guy's late for his own funeral." I sprang like a Hallowe'en cat at his face and gouged at his eyes. He was big and easily held me off until the driver from the next car pulled me away.

"You've shamed us all and your mother who bore you," my aunt said. "She must be reeling in her grave. God will *never* forgive you, Roy. Never."

I caught the bus back to school that same night and got off at the road which runs down a little hill and then up again to the campus. The classrooms were dark but the dormitory windows were live with light. Oak leaves swished in the night wind. The clock on the Administration Building tower showed 10:05. When I looked up at it my cap blew off and the wind rolled it down the hill. Before following it to go to the dormitory to pack, I stood and watched the cap blow past the street light and on down the hill, carried into the darkness by the goddamned, son-of-a-bitching wind.



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# The Helper

Philip Levine

No joke is more exhausted and less funny than the income tax joke. The little frightened man who sits up all night to get his returns in before the Big Bad State gets a deputy out for him, how familiar he is, and how essentially fictive, we tell ourselves. If we think about it, it probably occurs to us that he belongs to a world that has largely vanished, the world of the lascivious traveling salesman, the virile iceman, and the naughty adolescents behind the barn or deep in the pasture. Today every town with a population of one hundred has a discount house, no one gets ice, and the kids all have sports cars, or at the very least Daddy's Rambler when they want it.

The truth is, there is nothing dated about the frightened man filling out his tax forms, nor is there anything particularly comic about the situation. The jokes have no particular significance because their butt is a Casper Milquetoast who is frightened by anything, and they are dated because they have not accommodated themselves to the present, for they have left out an essential element of the new situation, the "helper." If today "even the man scavenging filth in the back alley trash cans, has two children, a beach wagon, a helpmate," he no doubt has an accountant as well, for who would voyage through the labyrinth of the tax laws, which are surely more complicated and more important than the road to Paradise, without a guide?

I have gone to some doctors who tediously explained the nature of my problem as though I had come to them for knowledge. I go to the doctor for two things, a cure and an assurance that I'm not dying, and I will usually settle for either. There are times when one must put the responsibility for one's body or mind or both into qualified hands; after all one is not an "expert" trained to cope with one's serious problems. And one trots off to the accountant with precisely the same need.

Although my income is by no means vast or its sources complex, I went for help a few years ago to a Certified Public Accountant who had been recommended by a friend. I had delayed until the last possible moment and so had to be accommodated during irregular hours. On a Sunday morning in early April I rose in the elevator from the clammy lobby of an old downtown office building, hoping I would like my accountant as I had come to like my doctor and my dentist. On the phone he had seemed a bit irritated that I had waited so long to make an appointment, and doubtless he would have preferred to spend such a pleasant morning with his family. I found his office in the dim, marbled catacomb of the sixth floor and knocked. The door was opened by a dark, short, unshaven man in his early forties carrying a cup of coffee; he wore a checked sport shirt and a pair of denim trousers no longer adequate around the waist, and he looked thoroughly unprofessional. As he ushered me into his inner office, explaining unnecessarily why the girls were off today, I wondered if I had come to the right place.

Seated behind his enormous glass-topped desk, surrounded by an army of musty unreadable tax volumes, and with his gold-framed glasses riding low on the bridge of his nose, he lifted my hopes. And when his hand came gently forward with a "what have we today?" I handed over my tax forms with an enormous sense of relief.

The next hour was one of the most surprising of my life. Never have I tried so desperately and so cunningly to place the burden of a guilt I felt to be mine onto another man, and never have I been so surgically foiled. For, of course, Mr. Harris, as I shall call him, was a professional. What were my medical expenses? he would ask barely looking up from the forms over which he poised with a drawing pencil honed down to the thinness of a needle, and when I would answer a bit too quickly, he would ask with the slightest suggestion of a smile, "Are you sure? Remember, Philip, it is not me they'll drag out of bed."

"Nobody's going to drag me out of bed."

No, of course not. It had merely been a convenient figure of speech. "Do you have the receipts for those travel expenses? Even your old plane ticket will help. Do you have anything from the hotels?" No, I didn't. I must remember that the burden of proof was mine; did I want to forget those expenses? No, I'd spent the money, and I wanted to get what was mine. Yes, I was entitled to that, he let me know, es-



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pecially if I could prove the nature and size of the expenditures. His hand, pencil poised and ready, hovered over a blank line until I said, "Yes, I want what's mine."

It was rather amazing, he commented, how I always seemed to spend money in round figures. "Isn't that something? You bought exactly $100 worth of books last year." And so I added a dollar and twenty-seven cents here and subtracted some change there to make it all seem a bit less predictable and a little more believable. Finally, he leaned back in his chair with a satisfied look and consulted his watch; in less than an hour he'd saved me $187. The form was before me and the tip of his pencil indicated where I was to sign, and I did so immediately, feeling that I had hesitated too often in the past fifty-two minutes.

"And I sign here," he said smiling, though even his sunniest moments were touched by the blue shadow of his beard. "Now you'll go to jail with me," I said. No, fortunately he wouldn't. The $187 was mine, and if there was a crime that was mine also.

"Seriously," I said, and I was serious, "if I'm in error about any of this, or if I can't prove that these were my expenses, what are my chances of getting in trouble?"

"Very small," he said. "You don't earn enough to merit an investigation. Very small and very real."

"Very real?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, if they want to get you, they can. You can't prove most of this. They might think you're honest, but they've got to have proof."

"What might they do if they investigated me? What sort of punishment would they deal out if they found against me?"

"I can't say; they're very arbitrary about it."

"Why, that's terrifying," I said.

Of course it was terrifying; that was exactly the point, it was supposed to be terrifying. No, he wasn't kidding, and he seemed not the least surprised at my shock . This was a small part of a planned campaign of terror. How could he be sure? It served no other function than to terrorize the great mass of Americans. He'd seen its effects on hundreds of people: "The tax situation scares the hell out of everyone, me included." And he'd seen the campaign grow; the State, he assured me, was making more demands each year, and their punishments were becoming increasingly inconsistent. "If people can't be made to love the law, they'll be made to fear it; after all the government has got to have this money." He told me that he had had some clients who had suggested they pay more than the law required so as to be certain they would not be harassed, but even payment in excess guaranteed nothing, in fact it might only arouse suspicion. "A planned campaign of terror." All the accountants in America knew this, so did all the lawyers. "It's common knowledge," he said, politely ushering me to the door.

Again, I hadn't come for knowledge, but that's what I'd gotten, and as I clicked down the dark hall toward the elevator, I wondered what great truth of my life on earth the Real Estate Agent in 621 could give me if I knocked on his door, or the Chiropractor in 617, or the Insurance Broker in 611. What little hidden nuggets of my private life were a matter of public fact to these experts? When I emerged from the cold lobby below I was not nearly as overjoyed by the bright spring sunshine as I should have been. It was as though the day were too bright, the sunlight too revealing.

But only for a moment. I am a free man in a free society, I told myself; the police and the armed forces are my servants and the great network of the state protects me. The dialogue went on, for I knew that when at dawn the jet fighters boomed over and their vibrations shuddered the foundations of my house, I did not leap from nightmare with any sense of security, and the reality into which I wakened was more detailed and awesome than my dreams. If as the years go by I come to accommodate the jets,



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if my body and my mind learn to sleep through the morning blast, what violence will I have allowed to be perpetrated upon myself? Whether I sleep or wake, something is being done to me, and long ago I surrendered the notion I could stop it.

No doubt men can live in the most unspeakable circumstances, I tell myself so as to defend what is left of me, and often having faced the violent and terrible they gain a measure of nobility deprived the average little man running from his average little problems. Today, it does not seem terribly difficult merely to survive; some say it is all too easy, and that what Americans lack is the minute by minute challenge of the frontier, for out of such circumstances are born men of substance, toughness, vision. Maybe. But I think of the men I knew who came back from the POW camps of World War II, men who took their plates into the corner and ate with their backs to their mothers and wives. The price that many of them paid to endure in a world of beasts was to become beasts. One former prisoner of war told me that he had been home six months before he realized that it was the manner in which he ate that was making the evening meal a traumatic experience for his family. "I knew something was wrong, everybody was upset and nervous before we ate, and then one night I heard the kind of noises I was making. I sounded like a dog." Part of the horror of deprivation is that one no longer knows what one is deprived of.

We do not live in POW camps, the defense answers; we do not live in a world in which the forces of society have declared themselves for death, for suppression, a world in which terror is no longer hidden in anonymity but walks the streets at broad noon, uniformed and efficient. All this is true, but invisibility and subtlety rarely make an evil less dangerous. And how can one deal with an external evil if one can no longer deal with oneself? If day by day I surrender to the "helpers" the responsibility for and the knowledge of my body, my mind, my finances, my defense, my rights, what do I leave myself? What significant choices can I make living in a medium-sized American town with three television channels?

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# Peril Point

Edythe Schindler

The sun went down but she didn't turn on the lights. She just stood in the darkness and waited for Howard to come home. Maybe he wouldn't. Maybe he was so angry with her, he wouldn't come home at all, ever, never. What a word, never. She shivered and thought about her baby. For two days now she had known she was pregnant but she still hadn't told Howard. Somehow she wanted to hold her child to herself, for a little while. She couldn't decide whether to hope for a girl or a boy.

Music, soft and syrupy, filled the room.

She poured a drink, sipped it and turned to the record player. With a quick, unnecessarily hard twist of the dial, she switched it off. Then



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she spit the words out to the empty room. "Behold — Pauline, the attacker of citadels, the wanton subscriber to impulse, the ungrateful immigrant, the loudmouth!"

She switched the record player on and off, on and off, all the while sipping her drink. Finally, she left it off.

Does he know I've gone and done it again? And after all my promises. Perhaps she was magnifying things, the way Howard always said she did, twisting them way out of proportion. Proportion, hey that was it. That was her whole trouble. Just plain old proportions. Now if she could just manage her proportions, everything would be fine and she and Howard would never have to argue any more.

But you couldn't even have a good fight with Howard. He just got quiet, deadly quiet and then got all locked up in some private place way inside himself where she could never get at him. He got polite. He got so polite you could just die from it, that's all. Just like his friends. "Born and raised right here in the South, honey." The shut-out. No, it really wasn't polite, after all, she decided. It was deliberately insulting, demeaning. Instead, she wished he would hit her.

Like they did back in Brooklyn. Not in her house, of course, for her mother had died when she was only six. But she remembered long winter days when, perched on her bedroom window sill, she had kept a lonely vigil on the network of windows across from hers. It had all been so noisy and simple, the loving and the fighting.

Yet despite the storminess of their first months of married life, she didn't dislike the old Southern town. Actually it was what she had longed for all those dreary years, those awful Brooklyn years sans felicity, sans affinity, sans everything. She was somewhat bewitched by the town's great spooky houses and gallant trees, mysterious with pendulums of rotting Spanish moss — whose deep roots shot lacy patterns in the crumbling sidewalks. The roots didn't bother her. What she seemed constantly to be tripping over was cherished traditions.

"Crap." The word spewed out before she could swallow it down. Quickly, and with wary, refugee eyes she scanned the room, half expecting to evoke an order of excommunication.

Soon she heard Howard's car streaking into the driveway. Hiding her drink behind a potted philodendron, she mentally drew herself up for inspection. White pumps, pale blue linen — she made a face — and the inevitable string of pukey pearls. The pastel touch. Now if only . . . but there was Howard in the foyer.

He was putting his jacket in the closet and she came up behind him to stand close and silent. Then, raising on tip-toe she bit his ear lobe and breathed down his neck. He swung around and she flung herself at him. He held her. She was content. Then she felt his hand under her chin tilting her head up and back and she felt she was falling. When finally she opened her eyes and looked into his, she knew he knew. She knew he knew about the afternoon and the women.

She said, "Crap, Howard, they were talking crap again and I just couldn't help myself." She saw him wince and something she herself didn't understand made her say it again: "Crap."

"I heard you the first time."

He went into the living room and turned on the lamp. Flute-edged china, crystal, heirloom silver and a cut-glass centerpiece which caught the light in its prisms, gleamed on the stark white cloth on the dining room table. A tired smile spread over his face. Still there was something in his terribly quiet manner that warned her he was furious. Robot-like, he moved to the record player and switched on "The Tennessee Waltz."

They stood there silently with the silly music between them.

"Howard, hey Howard, don't look like that. I tried. I really did." She almost called him honey, but she'd made a solemn pact with herself never to use that sappy word. What were the words, what were the ways to show him her love? How hard they were to find. Oh, how she loved him. A happy man, rooted in place and fundamentals, he stood so square to the world, so aware of himself; he was reassuring. But now this was a new look on Howard's face.

"All right, honey," he said, "tell me about it."

"We were all sitting around at the Club. The girls were talking. And can they talk! It's almost as if they're afraid to stop, afraid of what they'll hear if it's quiet. Well, they were raking everything over — The United Nations, Foreign Aid, States' Rights. Howard, they don't want rights; they want privilege.

"They're holding on to the old ways. But they're changing, you'll see."

She retrieved her drink from behind the philodendron and took a swallow. "I know. But I'd had three Pink Ladies. I kept telling myself to shut up. Howard, I don't even



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like Pink Ladies, but they were all drinking them and I was trying to be one of the girls, like you said. They're awful. The Pink Ladies, I mean. Well, I kept drinking and pretending not to hear and then all of a sudden, gadzooks, I started in."

She came toward him hoping for an invitation to squeeze into his chair. But Howard's face was all closed over and she couldn't tell if he wanted her. So she turned away and plopped herself down on the cushion in front of the record player, first switching it off.

"Howard, it's just that I, the real me, inside here, it keeps wanting to come out. And sometimes I have to, I just have to let me out. Remember, Howard, hey remember back at school how you used to like me? Oh, I'm not talking about love. I mean like. We used to sit up all night at Angie's and talk, sometimes just the two of us, sometimes with a whole crowd, like the kids from Law School. It was good, Howard. Remember how good it was batting around ideas about people really caring about people all over. No reservations, no protectionism, down with sectionalism! But here, Howard, back on the farm, you're different. You're a real cautious, quiet guy. How about it?"

"I've told you. This is my home. This is where I work. I've got to get along. Now just what did you say to those women today?"

She looked straight at him. "I said you all are talking crap."

He groaned.

"All right. So send me back to Brooklyn."

"No one ever mentions Brooklyn, except you," he said evenly.

"But they're thinking it all the time. I know. They go around thinking, 'Now what in the world did our Howard ever see in her. Sure, she's a smart little thing, a Master's in Political Science an' all. But my dear, the make-up she uses, the manners and oh, the accent. Poor Howard.' One of these days I'm going to get up on the platform at the Club. I won't need a mike. I'll just scream that I, Pauline Willard, fresh out of Brooklyn, hooked their poor dear Howard because I'm good in bed."

"That's enough, Pauline. And honey, please stop yelling."

"I like to yell," she shrieked. "When I get mad, I yell. Nothing sugar-coated about me, Howard. I'm refreshing. Remember, Howard, when you told me how refreshing I was?" She wished she could cry. "And when they try to tell me we're living in a welfare state, well forgive me, but I have to tell them that Public Housing and the program to reduce the Tariff just don't constitute a welfare state."

He slumped in his chair. "You had to tell them that?"

All at once she was weary. "Yes, I had to. I guess I just had to."

"You had to dig them on the Tariff of all things? You had to make a smart aleck sophomoric speech and get everyone all riled up and scared. . . ."

"Certainly scared. You know this town depends on the factory, and if we can't compete, if those Jap cameras come in and can be sold cheaper than ours, just who do you think will have a job or anything at all in this town?"

"You could make other things, you could. . . ."

"Thanks for the suggestions, honey, but I don't need you to tell me how to run the factory. In fact, I don't need you to go spouting all your unrealistic ideas all over the place."

She had never seen Howard so angry before. He was actually fighting with her. Now she was scared.

He got up and poured a drink. "And do you know where I was when I got this delectable little tid-bit, about how my wife was ranting and raving at the women again and practically carrying on like a . . . like a communist."

She started to protest, but he shushed her with a wave of his hand.

"Well, honey, I was in Rutledge's office. Now Ed Rutledge happens not only to be an old friend but he just happens to be my boss. There I stood while his wife kept him on the phone for not less than ten minutes giving him a blow-by-blow description of your performance. And do you know why I just happened to be in Ed's office?"

Child-like, she shook her head obediently from side to side.

"Well, Ed was making plans to send me to Washington. 'Take the wife along,' he told me. 'Charge it to the Company.' And do you know why he's sending me to Washington? Well, it's my job to see that they don't lower the tariff on Japanese imports, especially cameras."

He came and stood over her. The look on his face was that of a man drowning in quicksand, who couldn't quite believe it was actually destroying him.

Her voice quavered. She was searching for the right words. "I love you, Howard."

"Do you, Pauline? No reservations? Then tell me, why can't you try to get along? Different is not where I want you. Why do you have



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to keep yourself different? Does it give you some sort of a thrill or something?"

She raised brimming eyes to him. "How can you think that?"

"I don't know what to think any more." He dropped down on the cushion next to her and put his arms around her. His voice was weary, gentle. "I love you. But you've got to stop arguing. You've got to get along with people here. I know most of the things you're saying are honest and right. But you can't ram them down these people's throats. You can't change a town's thinking and feeling over night. You've just got to get along or . . ."

"Or?"

He kissed the tears on her face and then her lips. She slipped her hands under his shirt and held on to him.

He spoke softly. "Now I want you to get on the phone and call Kay Rutledge. Try to smooth things over. Invite her for lunch or something, anything. Tell her you weren't feeling well. . . ."

"You can't mean it."

"I never meant anything more in my life." He got up.

"Oh, Howard."

"I'm going upstairs," he said. "I'm beat. Don't bother about dinner. I'm not hungry."

"Howard. I baked a pecan pie —"

Then she really cried. The more she thought about how she'd wrestled with that pie and how, for once, it had turned out just right with the crust done but not burned and the pecans firmly ensconced, the more she cried. She cried for that pie and for the girl she used to be and for the one she was now. Standing helplessly in the middle of the room trying to gulp back the sobs, she suddenly remembered her baby. Then she stopped crying.

She could hear Howard stamping about upstairs and then finally the squeaking of the old bed under his weight. She walked around the room switching off lamps, lost in a longing for Howard, for the feel of him, for the moment they would share when she told him about the baby.

She hesitated in front of the record player. Howard loved to fall asleep to the sound of music. She turned it on. The familiar, trivial music washed over her. She swayed; she hummed a little. Her whole body went with the music. It was kind of nice to listen to, after all. It was so easy to listen to, making no demands, requiring nothing of you. You just shut your eyes and let it flow over you. So sweet, so easy. You just let yourself drift along. That's all there was to it. In time, she told herself, she probably wouldn't remember anything else or want anything more. She turned the music louder, then louder again. Soon it was the only thing she could hear.



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# *Mailer:* The Jew As Existentialist

Paul B. Newman

In a recent work, a book of poems called *Deaths for the Ladies (and other disasters),* Norman Mailer has developed his philosophy of the hipster. Although the poems are negligible as poetry, they tell us more about Mailer who, as Richard Gilman says, is always interesting. The hipster of course is Mailer's concept of the existentialist: the man who uses violence therapeutically, who renews his worn-out passions and ideas through resort to traumas which restore his contact with reality. In one of the poems, Mailer says:

So long
as
you
use
a knife,
there's
some
love
left.

The tone of this is cynical and sly. One feels that he is referring to his former wife, justifying his reported attack on her. The celebrated stabbing is a part of the curious texture of this book which weaves obsessive themes through a series of memories, images and defiant observations. In "The White Negro," Mailer has already prepared his own justification:

> The strength of the psychopath [*i.e.,* the hipster] is that he knows (where most of us can only guess) what is good for him and what is bad for him at exactly those instants when an old crippling habit has become so attacked by experience that the potentiality exists to change it, to replace a negative and empty fear with an outward action, even if — and here I obey the logic of the extreme psychopath — even if the fear is of himself, and the action is to murder.

The stabbing, we may gather, was an action which proceeded from inner necessity. It saved Mailer from some complex despair which was even greater than the despair manifested in the action. Mailer has a name for the first of these despairs. In the poems he calls it "cancer." Cancer is both a literal, physical disease, as well as a symbol of inner breakdown which seems

to function much as impotence does in *The Sun Also Rises.* In one of the poems, which is dedicated to Hemingway, Mailer says:

> That first unmanageable cell
> of the cancer which was to
> stifle his existence arrived
> to him on a morning when by
> an extreme act of the will
> he chose not to strike his
> mother. Since this was
> thirty-six hours after he
> had stabbed his wife, and
> his mother had come at a time
> when he wished to see no one
> in order to savor the woes
> and pawed prides of his soul,
> (what a need for leisure
> has the criminal heart) his
> renunciation of violence
> was civilized, too civilized
> for his cells, which proceeded
> to revolt. But then it is
> the thesis of this summary
> that civilization spawns
> cancer . . .

The cause of cancer is thus the quiet desperation of a life in which devotion has become the stale reflection of a faithless society. The Brooklyn of the *Reader's Digest,* baked beans, big cars and dishwater is Mailer's Waste Land, where calculated actions have destroyed the beauty and spontaneity of love in every sense, from the natural to the religious. In Brooklyn as in the Paris of *The Sun Also Rises* the horror is of an impotence which centers on the failure of sex but spreads in widening circles through all levels of man's experience. The search is for the "Grail of the good orgasm" which will heal



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the maimed sexuality of modern man — the Fisher King of Mailer's world who must find redemption not in God but in the act of sex itself — but there is a strong distrust of women here, as in Hemingway; in a poem called "Circumcision," Mailer says that women don't get cancer of the cervix as much from Jewish men (who are "crucified" in their first week of life); they give cancer to Jewish men.

Sex, which ought to heal man, gives him cancer. The greatest despair of all is this: that what ought to save merely heightens the disease. The poems are filled with rebellious jabs at sex — at its inadequacy, at it triviality, at its boredom — and then against these disgusted cries comes a cry of real anguish:

> O sex
> you are dying
> I know
> but in
> whose name?
> and for what
> cause?

The most moving of these cries seems to be directed against his second wife, Adele Morales:

> I have been brave a little but not nearly
> brave enough for you, greedy bitch,
> Spanish lady, with your murderous
> Indian blood and your crazy purity . . .

The complex frustration behind these statements cannot be easily summed up. Perhaps the closest one can come to it is to say that Mailer is a romantic who "came back to Home and Mother, to fight it out at close quarters," as D. H. Lawrence says of Melville. *Deaths For The Ladies* is filled with images of grey Sunday afternoons at home with the wife, and with invariably insulting references to home and mother. It is as though Mailer had stepped back into the pages of "The Time Machine," those least effective passages in *The Naked and the Dead,* and had attempted to relive the frustrations which he had already depicted there. Hipsterism as the catharsis for all this boredom is plainly a form of romantic quest, with the release from impotence and the rebirth of faith as the possible reward. I would argue, however, that Mailer was wrong to go back to Brooklyn, and that his romantic quest found its true realization in that blistering trek through the kunai grass and the sweltering jungles that led to Mt. Anaka in *The Naked and the Dead.*

In my opinion, it is not sex that gives Mailer his strongest stimulus as an artistic subject, but the conquest of nature and the violence of war. After *The Naked and the Dead* the rest of his books seem "claustrophobic" — one thinks of the airless rooms of *Barbary Shore* or the air-conditioned rendezvous of *The Deer Park* — and Mailer's latest novel, *An American Dream,* seems no better in this respect. It is not that Mailer sees nature as beautiful or as making man better — the character who is most at home in nature in *The Naked and the Dead,* Croft, is also the most vicious — but that the real consequences of nature are self-confrontation and existential freedom. And these are precisely the qualities that Mailer fails to express in his poems.

The poems fail, first of all, because their tone is too much a part of the frustration they reject. Instead of being rebellious, their flippancy is so flat as to be almost toneless; and the "beat" rebellion against the lyric, which they represent, has become indistinguishable from the surrounding machine monotony. What they lack, perhaps, is a compelling dramatic symbol which would bring the quiet desperation of life to crisis in the presence of death. The war served this purpose in *The Naked and the Dead,* much as epidemic did in Camus' *The Plague.* For example, the concept of impotence which never reaches any real crisis in the poems is brought home in *The Naked and the Dead* by a shocking image: that of a Japanese soldier's corpse whose genitals have been burned away leaving the ashes of the pubic hair like "a tight clump of steel wool" — and the violent homeliness of the comparison reveals the author's essential standpoint toward quiet desperation, as do his descriptions of trench mortars that sound like fly-swatters, rifles that sound like slapping belts, machine-guns that fire like acetylene torches.

In Mailer's work the act of self-awareness is always poised against the act of violence; and the crisis of existence of the "Jew" is always countered by the crisis of violence of the "Philistine" barbarian. In General Cummings and Lieutenant Hearn these two aspects of Miller's thought are realized, as they are in Sergeant Croft and Private "Red" Valsen.

Valsen's moment of crisis arrives when he sees a Japanese corpse:

> There were no wounds on its body, and its hands were clenching the earth as if to ask for a last time the always futile question. The naked shoulders were hunched together in anguish, and he could easily conceive the expression of pain that should have been on the corpse's mouth. But the corpse lay there without a head, and



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> Red ached dully as he realized the impossibility of ever seeing that man's face. There was only a bloody fragment at the terminus of the neck. The body seemed to lie in a casing of silence.

Gazing on the corpse, identifying himself with the man it had once been, Red is drawn into a new awareness, perceiving how fragile a man is, realizing that he himself is going to die. As he moves from recognition to recognition, death ceases to be an abstraction for him. The tragic emotion of the recognition of the scapegoat is fused with a mounting sense of horror as the reality of death is heightened by his increasing awareness of the body's smell:

> It caused him a deep pang of fear. . . . He passed from the first warm smell of decay into the pungent quivering core of the stink, a clear nauseous odor that shocked him with cold fingers. It was the smell he would have expected if he had lifted a coffin lid, and it remained in him for a long bad moment in which he looked at the body and didn't look, thought of nothing, and found his mind churning with the physical knowledge of life and death and his own vulnerability.

In this moment of crisis, Red is stripped of all the defenses of consciousness and prior thought. It is a moment of "nakedness," brought on by the power of the scapegoat to bring us to a truer recognition of ourselves. At the same time it is a shock to Red's defenses — an assault on his beliefs — and if they reel beneath the impact the resulting implications are clear. *The Naked and the Dead* is a symbolic picture of the loss of faith and the "forlornness" of modern man, as heightened and dramatized by the crushing recognitions of the war.

In *An American Dream* Mailer heightens this vision to the point of artificial horror, but the fundamental sense of disintegration, smashing Valsen's defense from within, is replaced by a smirking self-consciousness. *An American Dream* is the product of all of Mailer's obsessions, and it is surprising to see how much violence he can bring to their dramatization — how much energy, how much speed, and how much brutal color — while at the same time he remains completely calculating and unmoved. The book has a swiftness of pace that depends on unmitigated shock — it is not dull reading — but the shock is of value only for itself. Mailer no longer has the power, apparently, to view his psychopathic fantasies as tragic. The book tends at times toward a sort of weird comedy, and this would be all right, but the comic tone is not sustained. It lapses too often into platitude and a sentimentality which is downright painful.

Mailer's hero in this novel is an existentialist professor, a war hero and former congressman who has been an acquaintance of Jack Kennedy (the action takes place during the early years of Kennedy's presidency). This man, whose name is Stephen Rojack, becomes a convenient mouthpiece for the author, dramatizing Mailer's central views, such as that courage is a cure for cancer and mental illness.

The action of the book begins when Rojack kills his wife and throws her body from the window. The rest of the book concerns Rojack's struggles to sustain his courage: not to confess to the police, not to be driven to suicide, not to be bullied by the gangsters, etc. The story is like that of *Crime and Punishment,* but stripped of the profound concern that made Dostoevsky's work a masterpiece. Rojack's real struggle is to *feel.* He is like a man in a nightmare, who swims undersea, incapable of touch or being touched by anything he meets. Like Sergeant Croft in *The Naked and the Dead* he is trapped by his own efforts to free himself (see the last half of this paper), and the more he pursues his goal the farther away he finds himself from it.

Oddly enough, the fundamental effect of *An American Dream* is cheerful and good-natured, in spite of Mailer's attempts to make it grim and depressing. Steve Rojack's sufferings are no more tragic than are those of Agent 007 in a novel by Ian Fleming, and we enjoy them on the same level. The only thing that is disturbing in the book is the author's emphasis on viscera. Mailer's sense of disintegration has gone so far that he constantly sees things in terms of their parts. The human personality is no more than the physiological processes on which it rests. The human body is no more than the fluids and tissues of which its organs are composed. The fluids and tissues are no more than the cells and molecules that compose *them;* and the latter give evidence of themselves in smells. Odors then become the chief insight into the nature of reality: the key to human relationships. And



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the shattering insights of *An American Dream* are all concerned with the vision of evil which strikes the hero when his senses are oppressed by some powerful smell. Just before he kills his wife, he tells us, "A powerful odor of rot and musk and something much more violent came from her. It was like the scent of the carnivore in a zoo. This last odor was fearful." Grilled by the police, Rojack refuses to crack; but his defenses almost wilt from "breathing the air of this room with its cigarettes and cigars, its coffee which tasted of dirty urns, its distant hint of lavatories and laundries, of junk yards and morgues." It is the smell of death which both fascinates and appalls him. Escaping the wiles of the police, he gets into a fight with a Negro jazz singer over a beautiful night-club singer whom he has made pregnant and, after brutally beating the other man, cleans up his vomit on the stairs. This act recalls his cleaning up the excrement of his dead wife after he has murdered her, and it recalls too the crushing realizations of Red Valsen in the presence of the Japanese corpse. But now the filth of the human body seems to be the ultimate proof of existence, the only reality, the final tie that connects one human being to another; and Rojack's actions have the quality of an act of faith. They seem almost sacramental.

Rojack's courage has a magical influence on the lives of those around him. His struggle to free himself is a struggle to ward off evil from the night-club singer, whose security depends upon his efforts to rise above his fear. Whether or not one takes this symbolism seriously, one has to grant the energy with which Mailer has organized his intuitions. Rojack's story is a continuous journey into evil; the evil being evil only because it limits itself through fear. And yet Mailer does not shrink from the implications of this view. Rojack is a Raskolnikov turned inside out, and his ultimate destination is Siberia — in this case, a warm one in the tropics — but having the same connotations: a spiritual hell of isolation, except that here a man can do everything except repent.

And it is interesting to see that the final stimulus which sends Rojack on his way to this particular hell is the odor of the human body. Rojack makes the mistake of visiting an autopsy and the cadaver, which reminds him of a German soldier whom he has killed, lets off a smell that makes him certain of his desperation. He charges on to Las Vegas — to fulfill a vision of the waste land which has haunted him since he killed his wife — and then plunges on to Yucatán. His power, like that of Raskolnikov, is not to dominate evil, but to be dominated by it. But all these meanings, which seem implicit in the novel, fail to be fulfilled on a level of brilliance sufficient to satisfy the expectations which they arouse. The best standard of comparison is still *The Naked and the Dead,* which illustrates the right combination of the ironic and the tragic that Mailer needed in order to make his existentialism convincing.

The organizational basis of *The Naked and the Dead* is a play on the ideas of nakedness and death which, involving each of the characters in turn, culminates in an ironic vision of the frustration of twentieth century man. This pattern can be seen in the death of Private Roth. Roth is a Jew who has abandoned his religion, who has given up the concept of the Jewish nation, and who has rejected any notion of a Jewish race. He is a man who has never done anything to distinguish him from the grey masses of humanity. But now, struck by Gallagher during the climb up Mt. Anaka, he rises in a blind frenzy of rage to discover that he has the courage to stop the whole platoon, to force them back. But he knows that the other men will abuse him if he does, and suddenly he understands, "A Jew was a punching bag because they could not do without one." Stripped of his abstractions, he sees the reality of suffering and death:

> All the protective devices, the sustaining façades of his life had been eroding slowly in the caustic air of the platoon; his exhaustion had pulled out the props, and Gallagher's blow had toppled the rest of the edifice. He was naked . . .

Staggering toward his death he takes the last blind step because he values the realization that death and anguish must be endured. He will not release the platoon from its bondage to Croft only to have its members "take relief from their own weakness" in abusing him. If he has to be the scapegoat he chooses to play the role to the hilt, and his death suggests that in this choice lies the ultimate source of the dignity of the individual.

Two processes are at work in *The Naked and the Dead*: one destruction, and the other self-realization (nakedness). The two take form as each of the characters is drawn into relation to the tradition of the scapegoat. Goldstein, carrying the wounded Wilson, is strengthened by the philosophy of his grandfather, who has told him, "Israel is the heart of all nations." The concept of the Jew depends on that of conscience, the



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old man has said: the heart "which suffers for the sins of nations."

To Goldstein, Wilson becomes the scapegoat. His struggles to save Wilson are a fight to preserve the "heart" which must not be allowed to die. Yet Wilson dies and his body is lost after a struggle whose absurdity foreshadows the flight of the platoon down Mt. Anaka and the winning of the campaign by Dalleson in Cummings' absence. Goldstein suddenly realizes that the heart can be destroyed and its destruction can be meaningless. "All the ghettos, all the soul cripplings, all the massacres and pogroms, the gas chambers, lime kilns — all of it touched no one, all of it was lost." His crisis, like that of Roth, is his discovery of what it means to be a Jew, not in the abstract but in the actuality. No abstract meaning can shelter him from the bitter and profound reality of death. The Jew in actuality is simply the individual in exile, who must fight to discover meaning even as a scapegoat.

The scapegoat finds his most complete embodiment in Hearn who is not a Jew at all but only looks like one, as he himself notes. A Harvard graduate with literary tastes, a self-professed anarchist who has dabbled a little in radicalism, he is of all the characters in the novel the most like Mailer. He is little liked by his fellow officers. Unpleasantly critical, detached, despising his own desire to be a part of the group, he is as much of an outcast as any Jew ever was among the gentiles; and it is this quality of maturity in his despair which seems to relate him to Mailer's central theme.

In his indifference, Hearn is a good deal like Meursault in Camus' *The Stranger*. The General sets Hearn certain tasks. These tasks are irritating. They enhance the general tone of absurdity in which the events of the book are set. But in addition they educate Hearn as to the necessity for a "fear ladder" as a part of the normal functioning of an organization. They are a challenge to his indifference, which as we can see is a disguised manifestation of his passionate desire to remain an individual.

As a demonstration of his freedom he crushes a cigarette on the floor of Cummings' tent. But Cummings has already trapped him, for Hearn has been tempted by the petty issues of the Army power struggle. When Cummings forces him to pick up another cigarette, his self-respect is shattered. The essential meaning of this incident is shown in Mailer's "The White Negro":

> To be cool is to be equipped, and if you are equipped it is more difficult for the next cat who comes along to put you down. And of course one can hardly afford to be put down too often, or one is beat, one has lost one's confidence, one has lost one's will, one is impotent in the world of action.

The hipster's "coolness" is his lack of emotional commitment to a society he despises, as well as a signal of his freedom from sentiment and all a priori moral codes. Now Hearn has failed to maintain his coolness. He has allowed himself to hope for preferment on the General's staff and he has maintained a vestigial attachment to the Judeo-Christian tradition, of which his feeling for the scapegoat is the ultimate expression. In trying to play the hipster with the General, he has been put to a sort of existential test — a crisis of courage — in which everything false in his beliefs has been swept away.

Cummings is, in fact, the better hipster. His sadistic tricks on Hearn are never purposeless but are an attempt to find catharsis for his own baffled and embittered spirit, vexed as it has been by his inability to get his troops to fight. His reason for sending Hearn on the patrol is of course the same psychopathic desire for murder which Croft reveals more openly in arranging Hearn's death in ambush. Cummings purges himself by this action, and — like Croft — he manages to avoid the terrifying crisis, the nakedness in the face of death, which strikes each of the other men in turn.

The reason for this "success" would seem to be that the hipster evades self-identity. In order to avoid mental suffering he inflicts physical suffering on others. Croft follows the same route. He is a cruder psychopath than Cummings, but he is fully as careful to protect himself from punishment. In all his crimes — shooting the striker, killing the Japanese prisoner, betraying Hearn — he is perfectly safe. Croft is shrewd. His nature has congealed. And he avoids the sufferings of the other men.

Essentially, Cummings is a hypocrite who never achieves real self-knowledge, and for all his audacious brilliance he is turning into a machine. "We are not so discrete from the machine any longer," he writes with unconscious irony, "I detect it in my own thinking."

Cummings as the exponent of fascism is the central advocate of organized psychopathy in the book. It seems incredible that Mailer can now see anything hopeful in psychopathy as such. The answer is that he accepts Lindner's view of modern society as a bubbling pot of psychopathic repressions, but finds his solution



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in the philosophy of Hearn: anarchy. He sees totalitarianism as a cause of psychopathy, not a product. It is an attempt to control the social pressure by putting on a lid. Mailer would prefer to throw all lids away:

> The removal therefore of all social restraints while it would open us to an era of incomparable individual violence would still spare us the collective violence of rational totalitarian liquidations (which we must accept were grossly a psychic index of the buried, voiceless, and ineradicable violences of whole nations of people), and would — and here is the difference — by expanding the violence directly, open the possibility of working with that human creativity which is violence's opposite.

Mailer thus seems to be attempting to fuse the philosophies of Cummings and Hearn into his concept of the hipster. The anarchy of Hearn would be combined with the self-cauterizing sadism of the General, who keeps his mind free of existential conflicts by purging himself of aggressions. Psychopaths do not go crazy, Mailer assures us, because they have learned to enact their infantile fantasies in forms of violence more therapeutic than a visit to an analyst's couch. There is probably some truth in this. At the same time, this violence denies the possibility of the highest form of self-awareness, because it shields the mind from the necessities of existence on the highest levels of courage. Courage exists most fully when one's self-assertion and one's empathy for others are balanced in a creative way within the self. And we can see that Cummings' empathy, like that of Croft, is limited; as a result he is crippled, finding his emotional satisfaction in sadism, as Croft does, or in perverse homosexuality. These satisfactions may be therapeutic but they are so at the expense of the possibility of any real cure. Psychopathic manifestations cure, it seems to me, by locking the individual within himself, by turning him into a machine whose destructiveness becomes extroverted rather than directed against himself. Freeing him from guilt, they free him from the capacity for suffering. (See Rojack, in *An American Dream.*)

In other words, self-assertion without empathy for others leads the individual into machine-like activities: rape, murder, etc., which are beneath the animal, since the animal lacks the impulses of congealed guilt which give these actions their dramatic meaning. Mailer's romantic quest has led him into a false synthesis. Hearn and Cummings have not been really fused in the ideal of the hipster (or in Mailer's hipster novels, such as *The Deer Park*); what has happened is that the latent hipsterism of Cummings has been stripped of its totalitarian disguises and its destructive tendencies allowed a more "latitudinarian" free play.

The quality that gives *The Naked and the Dead* its superiority over Mailer's other novels is the energy of its respect for what exists outside the self. And it seems to me that this respect stems from the Judeo-Christian tradition of the scapegoat as a symbol of the discovery that other selves exist. It is the recovery of being out of a fusion of empathy and self-assertion. Hipsterism is a desperate attempt to recover self-assertion in a time when it and empathy seem to have become so widely separated that any fusion is impossible.

Croft's self-assertion carries an ice-like and fathomless contempt for the other. He is a modern Faust, a Captain Ahab, pursuing the romantic quest of God-like supremacy over his own soul and the souls of others. All the "weaker" emotions, the unpredictable movements of the psyche, the underground imperatives of love and empathy, are ground beneath a remorseless pride, leaving him crippled by his anxiety — forced to "therapy" through sadistic acts of violence. The killing of the Japanese prisoner restores his confidence. The existential rage and pain of the other man never comes to crisis in him. He is a monad and invulnerable to his own humanity.

Hearn, on the other hand, is limited by his empathy, his consideration of others' points of view. In spite of his decision to return to base camp, he sends Martinez up the pass, out of respect for Croft's wishes. Like Lord Jim, he is betrayed by his own idealism, but at the bottom is the pressure of his own ego, his own desire to climb the mountain. If Croft is self-assertion and he is empathy (the inner- and the other-directed man), then he avoids the hysterical extremes of Croft and Cummings only to trip over the blind gap in the center — the well of indecision that awaits the self-conscious liberal in a time of violent change. Croft is the most efficient hipster in the book. Violence is his essential meat. As Cummings has told Hearn while forcing him to pick up the cigarette, the fact of power is no accident — the man who holds the gun is not necessarily a bastard; he merely has his wits about him. Croft outwits Hearn; he also outwits Valsen, whose last attempts at self-dignity he literally crushes at gunpoint, illustrating Cummings' comments to a T. As Lindner says, "[The psychopath] appears



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to be more *delicately-poised* than his fellows; and he is provided with a curious animal ability to marshal support for hair-trigger movement." The psychopath is adapted to a life of violence. He is a sophisticated primitive created out of breakdown — emerging from the decay of individualism, he takes his psychic satisfaction in speeding its destruction. He is an adaptation of the frontier type — one of the images which both Lindner and Mailer use in their descriptions of the psychopath — but he has twisted the rebellious impulses of the frontiersman into a pattern of infantile regression. As Mailer says of Croft:

> His ancestors pushed and labored and strained, drove their oxen, sweated their women, and moved a thousand miles. He pushed and labored inside himself and smoldered with an endless hatred.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> I HATE EVERYTHING WHICH IS NOT IN MYSELF.

The crippling effect of romanticism in the modern world — the wounding of the individual through his mere attempt to be an individual — finds its expression in characters like Croft and Cummings, just as — at the same time — these characters have something transcendent in them, which over-rides the intentions of the author and predicates the necessity of romanticism. Croft and Cummings are modern Fausts. Freedom through power is the release they seek from the compulsive pattern of their anxieties; and the climb up Mt. Anaka is the symbolic pattern of all romantic quests viewed, however, ironically and existentially.

Hearn's struggle for freedom includes a governing sense of its own romanticism. Thinking of Cummings' words he muses:

> Cummings had once said, "You know, Robert, there really are only two kinds of liberals and radicals. There are the ones who are afraid of the world and want it changed to benefit themselves, the Jew liberalism sort of thing. And then there are the young people who don't understand their own desires. They want to remake the world, but they never admit they want to remake it in their own image.
>
> It had been there all the time, partially realized, always submerged. . . .
>
> Not a phony but a Faust.

Out of his nausea and self-disgust, his rebellious perception of himself as a *thing* (for to him an uncontrolled romantic is something less than human), Hearn is moving toward an existential pattern of fulfillment, and it seems to me that the outlines of this pattern exist in the Jewish attitude toward experience — if one may summarize a whole complex of attitudes in such a simple term — which in turn reaches its highest expression in the Book of Job. Job as existentialist is the man who rejects all ready-made interpretations of his suffering — first and foremost the retribution dogma (that only the wicked suffer) — and who instinctively senses how *all* explanations would lessen the dignity of his suffering. At the same time Job is the eternal scapegoat. He dramatically refutes the idea that existence is without meaning even as he opposes all facile explanations of God's intent. Rebelliously resisting God, he takes upon himself the guilt of being human. His anguish and despair — his doubt that he has deserved his sufferings — are precisely what give his sufferings their dramatic quality. If he had passively submitted — as Eliphaz, Zophar and Bildad urged him to do — he would have ceased to be a scapegoat in any except an abstract sense. His struggles are primarily to convince the others — and himself — that his sufferings could have happened to any one of them. His bitterness, therefore, is a reflection of the chance nature of his misfortune. What he cries out for is sympathy — a recognition of the common nature of man's fate — and what he most fiercely rejects is that he is in any way a special case, except as his misfortune has made him so.

Job's existential crisis is sharpened by his sense of the reality of other men who, totally failing to comprehend his sufferings, harp on a religious philosophy which only heightens his isolation. If he were a romantic he would not feel this grinding sense of forlornness. His empathy is the source of a bitter irony: that he can still feel the moods of others, while they have lost all touch with his. His insistence that the ideas of the rest are false — that the intentions of God cannot be really understood — are a part of his insistence that man cannot be reified.

Now it is clear from Mailer's general attitude that he regards the common soldier as the scapegoat of World War II. Hearn's decision to resign his commission and become an enlisted man is plain evidence of his intent to accept the role of scapegoat: as is his comment, "It is better to be the hunted than the hunter." His death — as a result of Croft's deception — simply heightens this dramatic contrast.

Some of the men in the platoon suspect the true reason for his death — not strongly enough to make its discovery possible — but only enough to suggest the possibility of their own redemption. Through Hearn they sense the



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tragic meaning of their own lives rescued, if only passingly, from the sterility of their isolation and their fear. Hearn's death as scapegoat is a reaffirmation of the values of empathy and sublimation — the fundamental virtues of the Jewish and the Christian heritage. The morality of the hipster — which Hearn has tried to follow — is countered by the morality of the Jew.

In Mailer's later work he has attempted to overthrow the hold of sublimation on his ethical imperatives. This is all well and good, as long as he does not attempt to overthrow the necessity for it. The "claustrophobic" quality of his later books arises from an existential horror which is not fully justified. There is nothing in the action which lends conviction to the author's sense of loneliness so much as the emptiness of the books themselves — filled with flashes of brilliance as they are. The hipster morality of the later books is a romanticism somehow blinded to the ironic backlash of an intransigent and unquestioning faith in romanticism in the modern world. It is a Rousseauean philosophy which sounds at times almost like a parody of D. H. Lawrence:

> What haunts the middle of the twentieth century is that faith in man has been lost, and the appeal of authority has been that it would restrain us from ourselves. Hip, which would return us to ourselves, at no matter what price in individual violence, is the affirmation of the barbarian, for it requires a primitive passion about human nature to believe that individual acts of violence are always to be preferred to the collective violence of the State; it takes literal faith in the creative possibilities of the human being to envisage acts of violence as the catharsis which prepares growth.

There is probably a certain amount of truth to this — as a rather anarchic defense of individualism — but what weakens its effectiveness is a certain coldness in the statement. You do not say things like this quite so absently and logically if you have any real hope for the truth of what you say. There is something machine-like in this argument for a world of untrammeled violence — something of Croft and Cummings in it — and although the author is arguing against the machine-like authoritarianism these characters stand for, one cannot fully understand the emotional logic of his position. (See any similar defense of individualism by D. H. Lawrence.)

What one suspects here is an argument against existence, as though Mailer were denying his own deepest anguish while attempting to free the rest of us of ours. As though he had stifled the conflict between empathy and self-assertion only to find that the individualism which he sought existed as fully in something which denied it as in the force with which he asserted it. The result is a series of brilliant insights — in his essays as in his later fiction — which somehow fail to sustain the weight which he puts upon them.

Mailer's mistake after the war may have been in going back to Brooklyn. Perhaps he should have followed the wars like Hemingway or Crane, for it is only in war that he seems to have found his vision of life — as a horror of quiet desperation — raised to the level of dramatic crisis. In war, man destroys the ideal of otherness, and in destroying it creates an intolerable apprehension of its lack. The excitement of *The Naked and the Dead* arises from the freedom with which Mailer considers the destruction of this ideal, while all the time asserting the necessity for it with his fullest strength. The passion of the book is its ability to hold up before our eyes the savage and unendurable trials suffered by a group of men who are scapegoats for all the cruelties and stupidities of a world (then as now) engaged in the most assiduous preparations for its own destruction. The book is a vision, large, austere, and calm, of a world brought to existential crisis. It is the book's freedom from hysteria, its confidence that the *other* still exists — in the midst of so much destruction — that gives it its stature. With the tranquility of true courage it examines the most terrifying of all concepts — that we Americans may be losing our humanity — while perceiving the essential romantic impulse behind our fall. Its faith is a confidence in the scapegoat — without whose cathartic presence the romantic quest is meaningless. Its vision is ironic and existential, a controlled approach to tragedy which never oversteps its own limits. Perhaps it would be better to call it a tragi-comedy. At any rate, for its humanity and artistic strength, it has not yet been equaled by an American novel of post-World War II.



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# Books

## THE HARBORS OF THE MOON

*An American Dream.* Norman Mailer. The Dial Press, New York, 1965. 270 pp. $4.95.

This review is late. And with cause.

Perhaps the proper place to read *An American Dream* is in a jet airliner at 37,000 feet. Anyhow, that's where I began it (going east to D.C.) and where I finished it (going west to Tacoma). One knew at the beginning that reviewing it would be a job; the kind of job one would rather not do.

Other reviewers would make it even tougher. Perhaps because the novel had been serialized in *Esquire* before the book was published, there was already a predatory scent on the air; the scent of animals prowling for a kill. Mailer invites such prowling, to be sure; he has always courted a bad press. Every year is "Jump-on-Norman-Year," and one distrusts the seeming heedlessness of such a prey as much as the cats which stalk it. Finally, and most important, there was the novel itself: a violent, painfully probing work; its style a surreal combination of scalpel and bazooka.

In the end, one decided it would have to wait. Let other reviewers have their say. Studiously avoid reading them. Let the novel and one's ideas and impressions of it ferment slowly in some earthy cellar at the back of the mind. Check the brew periodically to see if it had deepened, taken on body. Finally, chill and serve.

Mailer's novel concerns the fantastic life of Stephen Richards Rojack. He is a war-hero (Italian campaign, WW II), an ex-congressman (contemporary with Jack Kennedy), an author-professor at a New York university, a TV personality, a "marginal socialite" by virtue of his marriage to heiress Deborah Kelly, and a man on the verge of madness. At the outset, one is inclined to discount the novel on the grounds that its leading figure is conceived without regard to reality, that he is a fairy-tale character. Maybe it's the jet; maybe it's the company aboard; maybe it's the tendency of the novel to invite the reader to examine the number of different roles he plays in a single day; but one recognizes slowly that Rojack is a living, American reality: not a man for all seasons, but a man of many.

At this point, the final sentence in the opening paragraph of the novel leaps out at you, and the title begins to take on its proper and ominous significance. Not *The,* but *An.* A version of that theme Scott Fitzgerald spent a lifetime exploring; the ironic difference between the idea ("a fresh, green breast of the new world") which America once offered and the "lunar" reality of modern American life where success is corruption even for the strong and the lucky. Even the marriage of Rojack to Deborah Caughlin Mangaravidi Kelly suggests Fitzgerald. In the novel's first paragraph Mailer seems to be making a public acknowledgement of Fitzgerald when he has Rojack say of Deborah that "she would have been bored by a diamond as big as the Ritz." Both Deborah and Rojack are at the pinnacle of "success" when the novel begins. But in the process of this achievement, their marriage has collapsed; and Rojack has discovered that the American version of "success" includes personal and psychic failure, a condition rift with the voices of suicide and murder:

> . . . Instinct was telling me to die.
> . . . . . .
> "You can't die yet," said the formal part of my brain, "you haven't done your work"
> "Yes," said the moon, "you haven't done your work, but you've lived your life, and you are dead with it."

Deborah, too, is a schizophrenic in her role. As a lover she is one thing, as a wife another:

> . . . That was love with Deborah and it was separate from making love to Deborah. . . . When she felt love, she was formidable; making love she left you with no uncertain memory of having passed through a carnal transaction with a caged animal. . . . It was not just her odor, . . . there was something other, . . . something as calculating and full of guile as high finance, that was it — she smelled like a bank . . .

In her role as "the Great Bitch," it is Deborah who brings Rojack to the crucial action of the novel: her murder.

The murder itself is well-conceived: half-intentional, half-accidental. And its aftermath involves Rojack with a host of other important minor characters: Roberts and Leznicki, the police investigators; Ganucci, a Mafia boss; Shago Martin, a Negro entertainer; Cherry, the singer with whom Rojack discovers that "love was not a gift but a vow"; and finally, with his wife's father, Barney Oswald Kelly, at the top of the Waldorf towers.

None of these characters exists independently of any of the others as Mailer clinches tight the fabric of his American nightmare. The fantastic quality of the novel is made perfect when the reader discovers that Cherry has been the mistress of both Shago Martin and Barney Kelly, that Kelly controls Ganucci, that Roberts and Leznicki give over the investigation of Rojack because of pressure exerted by Kelly through government channels. The shock is at its deepest when we finally discover, in a twist that owes something to Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night,* that the novel's chain of sexual failure and corruption has its source in Kelly's earlier incest with Deborah.

The import of these relationships is clear: none escapes the corruption of his dream and the small nastiness of capitulation.

Rojack is never punished for the murder of Deborah. The reader may even wonder whether a crime has been committed. For Deborah's character and Rojack's near-madness are mitigating factors. And where all is corruption, how is one to determine crime? These considerations will more than likely be ignored by those critics of the novel who have a tendency, in any case, to slap the label "Obscene" or "Immoral" on any work containing a seduction or a four-letter word. However,



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SUPER MARKET SUITE

1

They tore a farm down in Mahalasville
To plant a supermarket.
Ground farm, steamed grain in iced coffins,
Feverish labels, once-in-a-lifetime bargains
With deviled crab.

The barn was already falling,
Held up by a consensus of webs, vapors
From an old still of fermenting straw,
The ratruns.

*Thought* up, too,
By the farmer, wheelchaired on a coral
Mortgage, yearning out towards the blue light
Of Florida Television.

Finders shall be keepers
For the surveyors, standing a green history
Before a firing squad of leveled transits.
Ores of corn, saltlicks, a manger
Dying out of one myth into another.

Bright pickups circling the street,
Purdue Hybrids lost in their own bounty,
Bulldozers snorting, children born to be discounted. . . .

Losers shall be weepers.

2

I dreamed I slept with A & P,
Rolled in her bounty, hung
By my carcass from the hooks
Of her revolving mouth.

I committed prodigies between
Her aisles, hustled new products
Through her rear entrance
And stood up, a pyramid, in cans.

O red and white and so much off
All week. Over the counter,
A meat case with red, red stamps.
O a lucky number with each bag full.

Incessant merchandising
Laid me high, low; and Jack,
Overstocked by nine months' time,
Colonized the suburbs.

*John Woods*

an apt comparison might be made between *An American Dream* and that most moral of novels, *Crime and Punishment*.

Indeed, there is ample evidence in Mailer's novel to suggest that Stephen Rojack has been living in a kind of Hell all along. Just prior to the showdown scenes with Barney Kelly at the Waldorf, Rojack describes the lobby as "a vision of Hell. . . ." And the Las Vegas to which he flees toward the end of the book is no different from the New York he has fled:

> . . . as if you were in the pleasure chamber of an encampment on the moon. . . . You caught the odor of an empty space where something was dying alone. . . . The night before I left Las Vegas I walked out in the desert to look at the moon. There was a jeweled city on the horizon, spires rising in the night, but the jewels were diadems of electric and the spires were the neon of signs ten stories high. I was not good enough to climb up and pull them down. So I walked out into the desert where the mad before me had come, . . .

Who are the mad who have preceded Rojack into the desert? Traditionally, the desert suggests the place of penance, of contemplation, to which the prophets have gone and whence they come. Too, it suggests, by its conjunction to the "jeweled city" of pleasure, that *An American Dream* is a radically moral book, a jeremiad against those forces within and without man which foster his perversion and the corrosion of his ideals.

Our quarrel with Mailer, if we wish to make one on legitimate grounds, must come, it seems to me, not with respect to the almost unrelieved pessimism of his view of American life; not with his style (for it is powerful, contemporary in the best sense, and never dull; perhaps the best in America at the moment); not with his conception of the character or the jaggedness of his plot; but with the weakness of the ending of the novel.

After what Rojack has gone through, and in view of what he is, it is simply not enough to pack him off in a car "to Guatemala and Yucatan." For there is only the slightest suggestion of the meaning of Rojack's action, and no suggestion at all of the significance of his destination. As it stands, *An American Dream* is Mailer's best and most powerful novel since *The Naked and the Dead,* but it has neither a conclusion nor an ending.

*Robert Dana*

## SPOILED LAUNDRY

*August Is A Wicked Month.* Edna O'Brien. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1965. 220 pp. $3.95.

After seeing off her ex-husband and eight-year-old son, who are taking a camping trip in the country, Ellen decides to take a holiday in France. She has a few awkward encounters; then, in bed (where else?):

" 'Nurse,' he said, mawkishly funny, 'can I have my medicine?'

" 'Provided you don't spill,' she said, mawkish too."

There are the all-too-usual obscenities. With the price of paper today, anyone can scribble them for his own amusement. There's no wickedness here, no experience, no change; it's all about as debauched as a bag of soiled laundry. The "holiday" is a long, bad



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dream. It lacks the proportions of a nightmare. Hearing the news that her son has been killed, Ellen's grief is like her passion — mawkish, dull. "She did not want to go home. By staying there she did not have to face the calamity." So there is an escapade with Bobby, who taught her how to swim and how to eat artichokes. "They made love of course." Bobby departs; his gift to her is a venereal "secondary infection."

Back in London, carrying her parcel of medicine homeward, her hungers presumably assuaged for a while at least, Ellen thinks, "If the days were never to be quite so lustrous-bright again, equally so the nights would not be so black." Lustrous-bright? If this was adventure, leaping from one hollowness into another, we had better keep our shoulders to the wheel for the summer.

*A. Farrell Borenstein*

## THE RACIAL NOVEL AND EXPLOITATION

*White Marble Lady*. Roi Ottley. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965. 278 pp. $4.95.
*Squeegee*. Jack Siegal. New York: Horizon Press, 1965. 217 pp. $4.95.

It has been aptly stated by some sociologists that "In-group virtues become Out-group vices."

One may wonder whether this is the case in considering a recent remark by film and theater critic Stanley Kauffmann dealing with the work of LeRoi Jones, whom he calls "a writer who — unlike James Baldwin — would be less than lightly held if he did not happen to be a Negro at this moment in American history."

Although I do not wish to question this opinion of LeRoi Jones' plays, I might add that he might hardly be regarded at all if he were not a Negro. It is about time that Baldwin, Wright, Ellison, and others be treated and attacked as American novelists rather than as Negro writers. The categories of the Jewish novel, the Southern novel, or the Negro novel often blind us to the similarities between them and fail to take into account, for example, the fact that the Negro novelist is simply following a prevalent pattern or that his narrow preoccupation with his group is being encouraged by agents and publishers anxious to capitalize on an ever growing market moving too rapidly to be able to discern shoddy and superficial merchandise. There have been novels by and about Negroes for a long time, but the events of the past few years seem to point to an increase, not based on a real attempt of first-rate novelists to bring this question into the scope of their work, but rather on a fast-moving, "get into the money while the getting is good" point of view.

Roi Ottley, whose untimely death in 1960 left *White Marble Lady* completed in draft, is the author of a number of journalistic accounts of the Negro in American life. His *No Green Pastures* is a study of race relations in Africa and Asia. His earlier works have been praised as those of a "trained observant reporter." It has been said of his early writing that in "depicting the color and rhythm of Harlem, Ottley is at his best. It is an area in which he is . . . completely at home. He knows its dives and nightclubs. . . ." There is little doubt that this is the best part of this novel which was completed by his widow and the publishers. But the effectiveness of his journalistic prose and his keen insights into Harlem life in 1938 are not enough to make a first good novel. In this novel concerning the failure of a mixed marriage, it is clear that the motivations are too shallow, the people too rigid and symbolic, the boundaries too artificial. We can not accept Deborah's inability to "force Jeff to accept her terms, . . . and the hostility of Harlem to The White Woman who can accept it only on her own parochial terms."

Ottley is at his best with types rather than individuals.

His pre-war Harlem is "The Back Door" of Perky Sparhawk, a tavern on a Lenox Avenue intersection, where whites and Negroes rub shoulders in "an air of contagious conviviality." Here we find the night people, "the variety of types crushed three-deep at the bar": Trudie, "a Slavic peasant type . . ., a social wait"; Sherl, who is Sparky's mistress; Knox Gilbert, the opportunistic theatrical manager-agent; Zabee, "a Creole, tall and shapely, with a waist . . . as slender as the leaves of Guiana grass." We see those for whom nothing existed but alcohol and music; we see pimps, junkies, and jazzmen. A sudden and terrifying outburst of violence has Junkie Joe stab Spongy Boy while the onlookers only look up for a moment, obedient to the unwritten law: "Every pot stands on its own bottom." Ottley mentions Carl Van Vechten's picture of Harlem somewhat earlier, and the influence is apparent from the outset.

Jeff Kirby and Deborah Comstock meet at "The Back Door," and they seem to fall into the same rigid, stereotyped character as the background people. Jeff is the grandson of Ditcher Kirby, who in August, 1860, had led a small group of slaves to terrorize and murder the white slaveholders of Virginia. He had escaped and returned to Richmond after the war to suffer the scorn and hatred of both races. His son, "Ditcher's boy," had not had a moment of peace until he escaped to Harlem. Jeff's father is a "Republican and an Elk, a deason in the church . . ., a successful undertaker, whose letterheads described him as an underground specialist." He is, needless to say, opposed to the marriage of his son. Deborah's grandfather was Levi Comstock, who, as an uncompromising enemy of slavery, "aroused by the widespread lynching of Negroes, emerged and made one wild, desperate foray." He had gone to Virginia and tried to free a prisoner, he was caught and executed as a criminal.

Jeff's advancement in the world of music becomes the focus of his wife's difficulty and the hostility of the two families, and their certainty that the marriage will fail culminates in an incredible cliché when Deborah slaps her husband's face and cries: "Get me a *white* doctor. . . . No nigger doctor's going to put his hands on me. . . . I'm sick and tired of niggers." This is the ultimate absurdity, the curse on all mixed marriage.

In a moralistic epilogue, Ottley plays the God of



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Vengeance when Deborah runs off with another man and is lost in a boat off Cuba. Jeff broods for a while, only to meet Grace Caldwell, "striking with her brunette hair, her deep olive skin, her veiled dark eyes." Of his child-to-be his final words are: "We only hope he or she will be happy with us."

If Roi Ottley seems overly pessimistic about the possibility of the acceptance of "The White Marble Lady," Jack Siegal's *Squeegee* takes an opposite approach, "That it is only by joining private realities with the mainstream of life . . . that human salvation is possible." Yet this novel of New York today is as hopeless as Ottley's. Almost all the characters are either Negroes or Jews; and if the reader concludes that these people, openly striving to come to some understanding, have actually failed, what hope can there be for the American majority or for the South where hatred and mistrust may have a legacy of two centuries?

The novel is filled with sex and lust, and Siegal tries to qualify this as a "false balm against the grey world"; but the presence of lust in almost all the major characters becomes an essential part of their limited lives, and the reader becomes convinced that the racial problem is inevitably tied up with our society's sexual practices and taboos. The novel begins with Benny Robinson in bed with his wife Althea and the lust for one's own race and for those of another race seems to continue to the end.

Benny, in his desire to escape from the harsh reality of his life, focuses his attention on all the women around him. He begins with his own wife, "her legs thin but straight, the buttocks high and round, like castanets seeming to click against the counterpoint of the pink mules slapping the whitened soles of her feet, the silk feel of her thigh still transferred to the palm of his hand like cockamamies." When Benny is not angry at the world for making him a window washer, a good man with a squeegee on the eighty-sixth floor, a man with hopes for a better life but unable to articulate his dreams, he turns to the desire within him to tear from society what he feels is rightfully his. On the subway, he rubs against a girl to the swaying of the train till she is thrown into the arms of a man and precipitates a riot. He follows a girl out of the subway, lusts after the blonde receptionist at the Unemployment Office, gets involved with another blonde in a racial demonstration, and finally tries to rape the blonde who has filled his thoughts, a Miss Brooks, a "real blonde, like a movie blonde . . . with a face modeled from cream and teeth which shone like pearls, shiny, wet, and when she spoke, the tip of her tongue showed . . . its redness undulating as though it spoke two languages. . . ." Her look of contempt and his own uncertainty prevent him from raping her.

As in Ottley's novel, the characters are all types, but here they are no longer typical but are deformed and absurd. Robert the Coronation represents the hypocritical parasite who adheres to extremist ideas while he thrives on the status quo through dope, sex, or gambling. His rape of Althea typifies the violent Negro whose only thought is to "get him some of that woman." The white nymphomaniac Lucille, trying to pass as a Negro, is pathetic and grotesque. The Jewish characters are enough to convince any rabid anti-Semite of the accuracy of his views. Stanley Rabin's attempt to explain the tragedy of the Jews to Benny is as meaningless as Dave Marko's willingness to help Willy while he lusts for his secretary.

In a series of improbable coincidences worthy of nineteenth-century melodrama at its worst, Dave Marko turns out to be the man involved with Benny in the riot in the subway as well as the man involved in the racial demonstration; and it is to Dave that Benny comes for a job. Benny's anger and bitterness drive him to insult Dave and rush out to do something stupid and violent. In another stroke of luck, Benny comes to Marko's house to get his wife, who is a maid there, and he does not know of the coincidence. In an exciting few minutes, he breaks up a party, knocks down a hulking bigot from upstairs who, earlier, had knocked down Dave Marko (Benny was division champ in Korea), and learns that Dave can not possibly be Jim Crow because his daughter had married a Negro (to Dave's consternation). Now we are presented with the possibility for salvation in all men. "The barriers crumpled and Dave wanted his daughter back." Benny apologizes for his crude language and goes back into Dave's apartment to find a solution.

Neither Ottley nor Siegal has written a novel of great merit.

It is sad that Ottley was only able to complete this first novel in draft, but the power of his earlier journalism seems to point toward a literary gift in that direction. Siegal has done neither worse nor better than many of his contemporaries who seem to have found success in the public pocketbook. His novel is to be made into a motion picture. While neither novel does the cause of race relations much good, it is not as the Negro novel that they should be judged. My recollection of both novels, however different they may be, is one of unreal stereotypes, false emotions, and absurd moralistic conclusions. A bad novel should not be permitted to be made into a good one by changing the hero into a Jew, a Negro, an Alabaman, or a Vietnamese. It is to our loss that it often is.

*Walter Borenstein*

## THE DECLINE AND FALL OF "ANTSY-PANTS"

*The Goldwater Caper.* Richard H. Rovere. Harcourt, Brace and World, New York, 1965. $3.95.

Although the title of this book fails to indicate clearly that the author is dealing with the 1964 National campaign and election, it does reflect the author's unwillingness to view his subject as anything more than a capricious, addle-minded man who displayed his gall to the world in running for the most important position in the free world. Indeed, Rovere sees the public career of Goldwater as a gigantic caper which would have been far more amusing had it not been capped (Rovere hopes that the past tense is the case) by a serious flirtation with the American Presidency.



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(Unlike many journalists who were visibly frightened by the possibility that Goldwater might one day be in a position to "mash" the nuclear button, Rovere never believed that Goldwater had any chance of sitting at the Washington end of the "hot-line.")

Much of the charm — if that is the word for it — of the book lies in Rovere's treatment of his subject as a fun-loving child who should not be judged at all times by the standards of the adult world. And if there is anything charming about the subject, it is due to the fact that neither does Goldwater take himself very seriously. At least he didn't before the late 1950's. Until then, the Goldwater story was the true story of American Success: the descendant of latter-day immigrants struggling against a rigorous fraternity life, speaking the language of the rugged west, squeaking out a victory for a seat in the U. S. Senate. The success story included, of course, the inheritance of a substantial wealth which was paid for, many times over, with the idea for "Antsy Pants" — the underdrawers which made the Goldwater department store chain known throughout the land.

Unfortunately, Goldwater traded this happy-go-lucky life for something he was not equipped to handle. According to Rovere — and his analysis makes a good deal of sense — Goldwater was a "go-along" Republican until late in the 1950's when certain young right-wing intellectuals got his ear (or, better yet, his typewriter) and began writing his books and speeches. This was to result in Goldwater's meteoric rise, and he was rushed to national prominence on the tide of neo-conservative frustration and indignation. This was also, in part, the cause for his disastrous defeat in 1964. For under his name, these neo-conservatives had written mountains of banal drivel which buried the good Senator. Goldwater was never able to extricate himself from this nuclear age jingoism containing such statements as, "We must proclaim for Victory in the Cold War . . ." and "We should, I believe, announce in no uncertain terms that we are *against* disarmament."

Rovere is at his best when discussing the politics of the right wing. In the best essay in the book, "A Letter to London Concerning the Republican Maoists," Rovere observes that the 1964 Goldwater party lexicon included such terms as "infiltrate" and "cell-group," terms borrowed from Communist literature. It is not surprising, Rovere suggests, that Communist tactics were emulated. After all, "these people believe that the Marxists are winning everywhere." Moreover, "ex-communists . . . had a large part in building the movement and giving it whatever it can be said to have in the way of ideology."

In substituting "Goldwater party" for what others, including Rovere, would call the Republican party, I am hoping to clarify a point which has been too often missed. In 1964, there was no such thing as the capture of the Republican party by anybody. The Goldwater forces did capture the presidential nominating machinery. But there is a wide chasm between this and capture of the party itself. The structure of present-day American parties makes it all but impossible for anyone to capture anything like a major party. Leaders in the Goldwater camp realized this and concentrated their guns on the nomination of delegates to the Republican National Convention. Students of American politics owe a debt to Goldwater for clarifying the difference between the convention or nominating party and any of the hundred or more other parties *within* a major party. Control of any one does not entitle anyone to control of the others. At times, Rovere shows that he does understand this.

# 2 POEMS

THE BURNING OF THE SONJI PALACE

On first glance
everyone appears
to be fleeing

and the same cart
five times repeated
is a curiosity

of chrysanthemums,
a litter of silk
bandannas. This man

masquerading so
successfully as a woman,
who sits in the cart,

who not one Samurai
can recognize,
is, of course, the Emperor.

The four gracious ladies
seducing warriors
are his deserted concubines,

flowers of his garden.
So the palace burns
and the scroll unwinds

— the mere suggestion
of the brutal, so just
is the formality

we've grown to expect:
the royal women
attentive to love;

the skillful swordwork
of the trained soldier.
In a bellowing flame



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The fourteen essays which make up this book were written during the space of time from just before the assassination of President Kennedy to a few days after the 1964 election. The reader can thus experience the anguish of a perceptive reporter who carefully followed the events of that traumatic year. Rovere says that he offers this book "as a souvenir of a toothache." For many of us, the memory of the toothache still hurts. But for those who do want to retrace the steps of that year, Rovere makes a good companion for the journey.

*William Baum*

# JOSEPH de ROCHE

of skirts, the Emperor
escapes North,
his eye on duty,

his costume
the burning subject
of betrayal.

MISTRESS BRADFORD BEFORE PLYMOUTH

Safe harbor. Landfall, you say — shipwreck
I call it. Disaster.
Sand and scrubby little bushes,
savages in rotting furs.
If this be God's good luck
I break the same on human wishes.

Occasions of death
work at us daily. There are none
escape it. This piety, this seasick refuge
hangs over me like a foul breath
whose promises broken, one by one,
unfasten thus in wreckage.

Who would pretend to understand
how much they truly lose
the things they leave?
Although I know, God pity us and save,
we do. I still refuse
this newer England.

This is a man's business,
the killing to come, the carving out —
God's vengeance, and wilderness
enough inside and out. I doubt
the homes we make outlast the woods —
the husbandries you keep will need these brides.

I swear I never chose this life,
this winter coming, this frozen
harvest. God forgive us. Sir, adept
at failure, if you will, Lot's wife,
I choose to look away and turn
and not accept.

## THE INFLATION OF A NATION

*Lions 3 Christians 0.* Ann Borowik. Pantheon, New York, 1965. $4.95.

"I suppose the truth is I'm fonder of his prick than his principles. There's more of it." That's the heroine, Barbara Denver, ex-actress, speaking of the hero, Jim Nation, ex-quarterback. And that is the novel in a nutshell; *Lions 3 Christians 0* consists of one monotonous eulogy of the physical after another.

Jim and Barbara are keeping house in an apartment in New York. They have one son and one on the way. They also have a husband and a wife from whom neither can obtain a divorce for one flimsy reason or another (so flimsy that Borowik is unable to state them). The husband and wife are villains. As evidence of their depravity, Borowik points out that neither wanted children. Barbara wants children; why she never says, but one can assume that having babies is a good, physical thing to do. Like breast-feeding; Barbara does that, too.

Jim's duties as hero of the novel are to operate a crane and to be admired. Every character in the novel esteems or envies him, and each has an admiring or envious remark on the size of Jim's genitals. Jim's other merit is that he doesn't read:

> "What's Mr. Nation's favorite book?"
> She looked up in some surprise and said, "Today's newspaper, I guess."
> "Well, to put it another way, what was the last book he read?"
> "Oh Lord . . . I have no idea."

Jim's foil, Pat Malone, does read. He reads, envies Jim, and drinks. He describes himself as an intellectual:

> I was simply stamped at birth as a thing people call an Intellectual, and that's what you remain no matter how hard you go out for track, or swear, or drink or screw girls. Then there are the jokers like Nations with bodies that are huge, healthy souls turned inside out and not a thought in their heads — just all sunlight and slabs of muscle and a game built into their bones. Hand me the bottle, will you?

The moral is obvious: If one is fated to be an Intellectual instead of a Quarterback, all he can do is drink to lessen the pain.

A plot is provided by Barbara's wealthy husband bent on destroying Jim and Barbara. He hires someone to run over her, burns down an apartment house he thinks they're in, sets up TV cameras in the floor of the apartment above theirs (he mistakes their pool room for their bedroom) and has Jim crushed by a crane.

The big question after Jim's accident is, "Can he or can't he?" Not can he or can't he work. Not can he or can't he keep his spirit alive with his body crushed. But can he or can't he copulate. And in terms of the novel, that is the vital question.

The jacket of *Lions 3 Christians 0* advertises a "devastating spoof," but such a presentation seems like that of a wife who, discovering she's put cough syrup in the



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pudding instead of vanilla, announces to her husband she's tried a new French recipe. Little humor is in evidence outside of flip diction, which, alone, does not constitute a spoof. Moreover, spoofing is hardly consistent with murder and mutilation.

The characters, though bearing a remarkable resemblance to one another, are common enough to make the reader feel he might meet them if he took a walk up the street — so he might as well take the walk; it offers more pleasure and profit than the novel.

*Madge Kistner*

## 650 MILLION MICE

*China and the Bomb*. Morton H. Halperin. New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1965. 171 pp. $4.95.

Reviewers notoriously complain of what is not in a book, rather than decently praise its contents. To make the most of this bad habit: this work might have furnished background on the traditional Chinese curse of inferior armament. The nomads of Central Asia were superior to their Chinese neighbors because they had the horse; just months before Western powers had the machine gun, Imperial troops were still given instruction in bow and arrows. Something might have been expected likewise on science in contemporary China, possibly with some remarks on the utility of atomic power in developing that backward economy. But Halperin provides no such content.

What we have instead is perhaps more interesting: the military mind laid bare. This is authentic Pentagon talking, written by a Professor of Strategic Studies, financed by the Defense Department and published by a house which accepts CIA funds.

Halperin's governing assumptions include the following: military considerations must prevail over political; the United States must struggle to keep China a second-rate power; a *détente* with Peking is a menace devoutly to be feared, but the incineration of millions of human beings is a probability, and the soft-hearted had best prepare themselves. One had thought, or rather hoped, that Hermann Kahn was dead by now, but evidently this is not the case. Neither history nor human beings seem to count for much in Halperin's atomic world. It never occurs to him that American public opinion should or will have a voice in whether the Pentagon can go on playing with our fates on other people's doorsteps.

The virtue of Halperin's approach is that he can handle Peking's feelings towards atomically armed powers very compassionately. Thus he quotes the vain indignation: "All (130) countries, big or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, are equal. It is absolutely impermissible for two or three countries to brandish their nuclear weapons at will, issue orders and commands, and lord it over the world. . . ." The curious by-product of this compassion is disregard of the normal Washington propaganda line on China. No hint that China should be "free" muddies up the reader's mind; nor does he argue that the Chinese Communists, despite Korea and Tibet, are at all belligerent. So cautious have they been, in fact, that they don't provide the Strategic Air Command with a reasonable pretext for preemptively destroying their atomic installations.

Halperin repeatedly declares that he is unworried by the Chinese atom bomb, yet he mentions the idea of a raid or missile strike on the Sinkiang installations on no less than 18 of his 159 pages. Finally he takes up this proposal seriously, and urges that "the problem be given detailed consideration at the highest level of government." Such an attack would surely be justified. For although in their first fifteen years the Chinese Communists have apparently been as quiet as 650 million mice, they lack a sympathetic appreciation of Pentagon plans for the states on their borders. Since they are so uncomprehending about what is best for Taiwan, Korea, Vietnam, they are, as we all understand, aggressive. Aggressive nations must undergo the risks of preemptive strikes by the United States which would, by definition, not be aggressive.

*Richard W. Reichard*

## THE PADRE AT THE WALL

*John Courtney Murray: Contemporary Church-State Theory*. Thomas T. Love. Doubleday, New York, 1965. 239 pp. $4.95.

Americans of almost any religious persuasion generally take the notion of Church-State separation as axiomatic.

Protestants in fact often treat Jefferson's phrase about the "wall of separation" as an article of faith — a peculiarly Protestant article in their eyes. Yet there has never been a sustained and respectable Protestant effort to develop a theoretical justification for the American practice. Because the Roman Catholic in America has long borne the onus of being "among us but not of us" on the issue of religious liberty, he has been forced (if he is intellectually sensitive) to wrestle with the theoretical issue. Thomas T. Love has given us a cogent and meticulous report on the struggle of one of America's foremost Catholic theologians with the meaning of the American arrangement for the Catholic tradition.

But as Love makes amply clear in his excellent chapter on the conservative Catholic position, there is a great deal more behind Father Murray's analysis than the prodding of Protestant and secularist suspicions. For Murray's first responsibility as a theologian, of course, is not to the rather brief tradition of America's "lively experiment" but to the ancient tradition of the Western Church which has always had its proponents of the "religion of the state" idea. The result of Murray's thinking his way back through both these traditions is a brilliant recovery and revitalization of a somewhat neglected stream in the ancient and medieval tradition of the Church. This tradition demands the recognition of the superiority of the spiritual realm in *dignity* while permitting, even demanding, a purely secular state fully independent of ecclesiastical guidance. Murray finds the First Amendment, therefore, a strictly political (*i.e.*, secular) statement and suggests that those Protestants and secularists who theologize it are in a



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sense simply fostering a secularist version of the "religion of the state." Of course, the argument is far more complex than these brief sentences indicate and includes a well-articulated concept of the state, political society, and civil society as well as of the nature of the Church, the freedom of conscience, etc.

The casual reader might have wished Professor Love had started right off with Murray's finished position instead of following in such detail Murray's own grappling with his tradition, and yet this seems to me one of the virtues of the book. For besides the substantive contributions Murray makes to anyone's understanding of the Church-State problem, his actual struggle to arrive at the position he does shows how creative an authoritative tradition can be. Unlike many Protestants, the Catholic theologian is not permitted to make an easy accommodation, let alone identification, of his faith with the reigning ideologies of the moment, or even of his cultural tradition.

Professor Love has given us a thorough, clear, and compressed treatment of these Catholic reflections on the "American proposition" and the Christian tradition. Henceforth discussions of the Church-State problem ought to be carried out on a more serious and intelligent level by all parties concerned with peace and American society.

*Larry Shiner*

## THEATRE HISTORY

*The Yiddish Theatre in America.* David S. Lifson. Thomas Yoselloff, New York, 1965. $10.

At the turn of the century, Eastern and Central European immigrants supported lively theatres devoted to the production of plays and entertainments in their native language. In doing so, they sought not only entertainment as relief from the pressures of adjusting to life in America but, more importantly, insights necessary to their survival and eventual assimilation.

Assimilation, however, was not the ultimate goal of the early Yiddish theatre, which, as described by David Lifson in *The Yiddish Theatre in America,* attempted to re-awaken in the Jewish immigrant his sense of national identity. Serious Jewish dramatists, opposed to the popular *shund* entertainments in which many present-day comedians received their training, concentrated on such matters as the Jewish cultural heritage and the refinement of the Yiddish language. As the Jewish community grew more worldly, it supported notable art theatres specializing in Yiddish translations of plays from the international repertoire and, finally, in the years of social unrest, Artef, a revolutionary workers' theatre.

This remarkable activity was not destined to last; for, as a result of the assimilation of the younger generation, the curtailing of immigration, and the triumph of the moving pictures, the Yiddish theatre was losing its audience. Gradually, such highly skilled actors as Luther and Stella Adler, Paul Muni, Jacob Ben-Ami and Joseph Schildkraut, and designers such as Boris Aronson, after having served their apprenticeships in the dying Yiddish theatres on New York's Second Avenue and elsewhere, left, and the theatres closed their doors.

A similar pattern characterized the careers of most ethnic theatres in the United States. None, however, contributed as much talent to the American theatre as did the Yiddish theatre. For this reason, *The Yiddish Theatre in America* is a history of not merely an ethnic theatre but rather of a major force in the creation of the American theatre as we know it today.

*Joseph Svec*

## A THICKET FROM THE POSTMASTER

*Goodbye Rosie.* James Lowell McPherson. Alfred A. Knopf, 1965. 372 pp. $5.95.

Through thickets of puns and word-play, this sociologist turned "man of letters" (now Postmaster of Marble Dale, Connecticut), James Lowell McPherson, tracks the comeuppance of the narrator Harvey Swithin Dart (né d'Art) in Way Upstate New York.

Harvey returns to the town of Thebes, "just one of the bases, not home plate," to raise funds for Thebes University. Ruminating over the notebooks of his father, a physical anthropologist turned geneticist, now living out his days on the Island of Tristan da Cunha, Harvey salutes his past (goodbye rosie). He salutes the memory of his grandfather Swithin, "Sire," who "sat in his study for over forty years and whacked away with innocent zest and good humor at the globe, blowing up gales around the American Indian or socialism or birth control, for he was a whirlwind and he believed in Progress. . . ." And he salutes the idyllic two years he spent at Sire's Folly, his grandfather's mansion on Lake Cromwell, with Margaret — whom Sire sired, and whom he loved. In Thebes once more, Harvey finds Margaret. He loves her still, but loses her to his friend Janko, an artist he met near a Quaker work camp in Austria. To their child, another Harvey, he bequeathes "whatever ambitions I may ever have entertained to sleep with his mother."

With Harvey, words are a tic; he has "a restless compulsion to dig away at words like carrots. . . . I have always been afflicted by echolalia, the babbling madness . . . jostled along on togetherstuck solid with thoroughcarried upbuilding constructive Germanic agglutinations; riddled by the staccato puffs and groans of what passes for speech in the throes of passion." This tic, this "babbling madness" prompts Margaret's mother, "Aunt Olivia," to accuse Harvey of wanting "to stay crouched in a corner" and to be "very very sneery and smart." A little Harvey, Margaret observes, can go a very long way. His virtuosity becomes a bit threadbare (both lambs and tigers, he says, "may dine non-carnivorously at my stepfather's table on casserole of burnt norton"). His references to somatotypes, to prognathism, to doliocephaly are more than a little exhibitionist. Aunt Olivia advisedly warns Harvey that one day "the hollow places inside you will echo and clang. Then you will look beyond yourself." Olivia, "Sire's Danish mist," knows perhaps better than anyone what an insufferable snob and a *poseur* Harvey can sometimes be.

Harvey ponders the Trinity of Science (represented by his father "with his calipers and plasm"), Art (rep-



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resented by Janko "with his Caucasian nudes and cartoon dudes"), and Literature (represented by his stepfather, Alvin Goldsmith, "with his genres and tropes"). But he plays the juggler with all three worlds. "Pshaw," Olivia says to him, "words, words, words. You cook without fire." Not always, though. Not when he looks at Margaret, "a small bright talisman" with longing, and thinks "if once I lay you I will lay the ghost that ghosts me." Not when he remembers Sire. Not when he says of youth, "in our teens . . . we surely know how much more simple other people are than we can ever be. It is then, before twenty, just when we are least inscrutable that we feel ourselves most so. . . . For just when we think we have emerged into flesh and freedom, shedding dreary hand-me-downs of moral sense and blowing away the thistledown fuzz of right opinion, we turn to see the crooked seams and the baggy seat of our intellectual arrogance."

Well, McPherson, are you an incorrigible "bubble-blower," a "sprouting porpoise"? Or next time around, can you turn up the flame? The light you cast might be more radiant if you would move back a few paces.

*A. Farrell Borenstein*

## THE UNKNOWABLE WAVE OF THE FUTURE REVEALED

*The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby.* Tom Wolfe. Farrar, Straus and Giroux., New York, 1965. 330 pp. $5.50.

Unless a reader is an epopt ("one instructed in a secret system"), a reader fails to grasp the sense of this incredible title until reaching page 76 of Tom Wolfe's expert scrime ("*t.v.* to fence") with either our psychedelic (Webster didn't help me here) and arteriosclerotic culture or with the multitudes assaulting and undermining old pretenses with their own new postures.

Tom Wolfe's impressions of teen-age culture and the passions of the proles first appeared as articles in *Esquire, Harper's Bazaar* and the *New York Herald Tribune.* The topics he chooses to write about are as diverse as the Las Vegas syndrome and the rich/or idle attitudinarians who make the Saturday Route promenade through New York Art galleries and auction houses. Demolition derbies in the south, the vulgar women in New York's Women's House of Detention, Girl of the Year Baby Jane Holzer, that Marvelous Mouth Cassius Clay, and the Beatles' d. j. Murray the K serve Wolfe equally well as subjects for expository profiles.

In spite of his love for rare and archaic words such as those purloined from this book for use in the first paragraph above, Wolfe's style is easy to read, a combination of bug-eyed wonder and obvious understanding of the individual oddballs and the subcultural pastimes which attract him.

Even when read at one sitting, the pieces hold up well in spite of his imitating infatuation with a few words such as arteriosclerotic which is used so frequently that "arteriosclerotic denizens" and "arteriosclerotic flamingoes" seem old hat near the end of the book.

This is an important book because a literate, perceptive man who knows how to write well with style and wit, comments on the strange mores of our dominant, old domestic tribes and the even weirder preferences and habits among the nationwide uprising of young barbarians who seem about to invade the lower, poorer, rural sub-cultures.

"It is 8:45 A. M. Thursday morning in the IRT subway station at 50th St. and Broadway and already two kids are hung up in a kind of herringbone weave of arms and legs. . . ." Wolfe then describes the indifference of the rush hour crush with "arteriosclerotic grimaces" at the entwined young lovers. "The boy and girl just keep on writhing in this embroilment. Her hand is sliding up the back of his neck, which he turns when her fingers wander into the intricate formal gardens of his Chicago Boxcar hairdo at the base of his skull. The turn causes his face to start to mash in the ciliated hull of her beehive hairdo, and so she rolls her head 180 degrees to the other side, using their mouths for the pivot."

Wolfe is making some profound comment? Wolfe is pulling legs? After reading this book, the neighbor's twenty-five year old adolescent with his Beatle haircut escorting his capri-skinned, bouffant-topped grotesque to the demolition derby may have added dimensions of interest as he roars away in his customized baby. Recommended for old and young (even if they have to sound out the words).

*Bernard E. Richardson*

## TOY SOLDIERS

*The Dirty Dozen,* E. M. Nathanson. Random House, New York, c. 1965. 495 pp. $5.95.

For the sake of this novel, some nameless, military VIP in 1944 conceived the idea of having a dozen soldiers who were court-martialed to death or long terms in prison volunteering for a secret, dangerous mission in pre-invasion France. This is a suspenseful premise.

Author Nathanson struggles manfully through 481 pages of the selection and training of the dirty dozen soldier-convicts. "A Negro, an Indian, ten white men. A southerner, a rapist, . . ." and there you are. Every stock character. A superman professional leader who is half Catholic, half Jew. A youthful WASP psychologist to observe. The now obviously out-of-work hangman as top-sergeant of the group. All of these improbables are garrisoned on the isolated estate of a British General whose Nazi-loving daughter is the only inhabitant. At a nearby pub an orphaned London barmaid awaits every opportunity to bed down with the hero-god leader of the dirty dozen.

481 pages for preparation and 4 pages for the action are followed by nine final pages of fragmentary ending.

Author Nathanson had a dandy idea but must be scratched for faulty delivery. It's ticky-tack. Nevertheless, a competent scenario writer could turn this into a bang-up movie by creating some easy dialogue for folk-hero actors and concentrating at least half the movie minutes on the mission as it is being accomplished.

*Armarius*



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## FAIRY TALE

He built himself a house,
his foundations,
his stones,
his walls,
his roof overhead,
his chimney and smoke,
his view from the window.

He made himself a garden,
his fence,
his thyme,
his earthworm,
his evening dew.

He cut out his bit of sky above.

And he wrapped the garden in the sky
and the house in the garden
and packed the lot in a handkerchief

and went off
lone as a polar fox
through the cold
unending
rain
into the world.

*Miroslav Holub*

Translated by Ian Milner

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